
The Pattern of the Way: Reflections on the Argumentation of the *Wenzi* *

Andrej FECH

South University of Science and Technology of China

The present study aims to demonstrate how certain argumentative features of a text that exists only in a fragmentary fashion can be used to gain a fuller picture of its original content and structure. The Daoist treatise *Wenzi* 文子 is particularly suitable for this study, for it is available in two different but similarly distorted and fragmented versions: the received text as well as some Western Han 西漢 (206 B.C.–A.D. 6) fragments obtained at the archeological site of Dingzhou 定州 (1973). The study first deals with the numerous parallels between the *Wenzi* and other early Chinese manuscripts. In addition to demonstrating the major influence of *Laozi* 老子 and *Xunzi* 荀子 and adducing circumstantial evidence for the time of the text's creation, the intertextual parallels also point to the importance of specific argumentative features. Among them, “antithetical parallelism” appears to be one of the most salient. The focus of the study is the reconstruction of a text sequence using this rhetorical figure. Furthermore, it argues that despite the widespread usage of “antithetical parallelism” in early Chinese texts, including the *Laozi*, there is some evidence to identify the source of the *Wenzi*'s inspiration for this particular argument as the *Xunzi*. In the latter, “antithesis” was one of the important constituents of the “patterned” discourse (*wen*) meant to reflect the theme of *wen*, the cultural legacy of the early Zhou Kings. Given the often neglected importance of the notion *wen* in the *Wenzi*, signifying the complete realization of the central Daoist notion, the Way (*dao* 道), the study concludes with the claim that, just like the *Xunzi*, the *Wenzi* also attempted to establish a connection between the content of its philosophical teaching and its formal, textual representation.

Keywords: *Wenzi*, intertextuality, antithesis, *Xunzi*, *Laozi*

* Parts of this article are based on my doctoral dissertation, which was published in 2012. See Andrej Fech, *Das Bambus-Wenzi: Versuch der Rekonstruktion des philosophischen Standpunktes eines daoistischen Textes der Frühen Han-Zeit* (Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang, 2012).

Introduction

In the present paper I aim to reconstruct some of the argumentative features of the bamboo manuscript *Wenzi* (hereafter referred to as the Bamboo-*Wenzi*) excavated in the tomb of an aristocrat from the Western Han (206 B.C.–A.D. 6) in Dingxian 定縣 (after 1986: Dingzhou 定州) in 1973.¹ During the Han dynasty the text was regarded as an important representative of the Daoist school of thought as a work of Master Wen, who, at that time, was considered the closest disciple of Laozi.² Reconstructing and analyzing the argumentative structure of the *Wenzi* is, thus, important in several respects. The most obvious benefit is that, as it is recognized more and more clearly today, the analysis of the argumentative strategy and the formal structure of a text give us the possibility of understanding its intention and meaning more fully.³ Furthermore, such an analysis can show in what ways, if at all, the techniques of persuasion as developed by this early proponent of Daoism were congruent with the *Laozi*, which exemplifies its central notion, the ineffable Way (*dao* 道),

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- 1 For more information on this discovery, see Dingzhou Hanjian zhengli xiaozu 定州漢簡整理小組, “Dingxian 40 hao Han mu chutu zhujian jianjie” 定縣 40 號漢墓出土竹簡簡介, *Wenwu* 1981.8: 11–13.
 - 2 Wang Chong 王充 (27–97) compared the relation between Laozi and Master Wen to that of Confucius and his favorite disciple Yan Hui 顏回 (521–481 B.C.): “Although Confucius was like a prince, and Yan Yuan like a minister, he could not make up his mind to reprimand Yan Yuan, how much less would Laozi have been able to do so, if we consider him as a prince and Master Wen as his minister? Laozi and Master Wen were like Heaven and Earth” 以孔子為君，顏淵為臣，尚不能譴告，況以老子為君，文子為臣乎！老子、文子，似天地者也。In Huang Hui 暉, ed., *Lunheng jiaoshi* 論衡校釋 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1990), 783. Translation adapted from Alfred Forke, *Lun-Heng. Part I. Philosophical Essays of Wang Ch'ung* (New York: Paragon Book Galery, 1962), 100.
 - 3 Dirk Meyer argues that: “It is clear that the formal structure of a text [...] was a vital element for generating meaning beyond the level of the lexicon,” see Meyer, *Philosophy on Bamboo: Text and Production of Meaning in Early China* (Leiden: Brill, 2012), 50. Joachim Gentz claims that: “In many cases the argumentative line of a text can only be reconstructed in an unambiguous way through the reconstruction of its literary arrangements, which embody and encode the argument as a whole,” see Gentz, “Defining Boundaries and Relations of Textual Units,” in *Literary Forms of Argument in Early China*, eds. Joachim Gentz and Dirk Meyer (Leiden: Brill, 2015), 133.

mainly by means of metaphors.⁴

I am using the term reconstruction in connection to the Bamboo-*Wenzi*, because, as will all the other Dingzhou manuscripts, the text was discovered in a severely damaged condition due to the fire set, on purpose or by accident, by grave robbers that broke into this burial site many centuries ago.⁵ What we are dealing with in case of the Dingzhou manuscripts are broken and charred remains of bamboo strips, readable only when viewed under a certain angle. Additionally, the obtained remnants were damaged and left in disarray by the devastating Tangshan 唐山 earthquake in 1976. Consequently, the Bamboo-*Wenzi* in its present form is too fragmented and incomplete to allow but the most basic claims about its original structure and philosophical content.⁶ However, unlike the vast majority of tomb texts, this manuscript has a received counterpart, which has come down to us by way of transmission.⁷ And even though a comparison between the two *Wenzi* versions shows that, in the process of its transmission, the text has been subject to rather dramatic changes that concern its protagonists, scope, structure and philosophical standpoint,⁸

4 For analysis of the metaphors of the Laozi, see Sarah Allan, *The Way of Water and Sprouts of Virtue* (New York: State University of New York Press, 1997); Sarah Allan, “The Great One, Water, and the Laozi: New Light from Guodian,” *T’oung Pao* 89.4/5 (2003): 237–85; Edward Slingerland, *Effortless Action: Wu-wei as Conceptual Metaphor and Spiritual Ideal in Early China* (Oxford & New York: Oxford University Press, 2003); Hans-Georg Moeller, *The Philosophy of the Daodejing* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2006); Andrej Feč, “Spatial Concepts in the Laozi: a Contemporary Metaphor Theory Perspective,” *Berliner China Heft* 46 (2015): 43–57.

5 Liu Laicheng 劉來成, “Dingzhou Xi Han Zhongshan Huai Wang mu zhujian *Wenzi* de zhengli he yiyi” 定州西漢中山懷王墓竹簡《文子》的整理和意義, *Wenwu* 1995.12: 38.

6 Ibid.

7 According to William G. Boltz, the “ratio of manuscripts with transmitted counterparts to those without is about 1 to 10.” See Boltz, “The Composite Nature of Early Chinese Texts,” in *Text and Ritual in Early China*, ed. Martin Kern (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2005), 52. This ratio has hardly increased since 2005, as the majority of the manuscripts excavated and published during the last 10 years have no transmitted counterparts.

8 From the twelve chapters of the received *Wenzi*, only some paragraphs from the fifth chapter have parallels in the bamboo manuscript. It is unclear how many steps of restructuring and reediting lay between the two versions of the text. Because while the involvement of the compiler of the *textus receptus* in this process appears obvious, it is also entirely possible that the imperial librarians, father and son, Liu Xiang 劉向 (77–6 B.C.) and Liu Xin 劉歆 (46 B.C.–A.D. 23) significantly changed the original structure of the text, as they did, for example, with the *Xunzi*. For their involvement in the restructuring of the latter, see John Knoblock, *Xunzi: A Translation and Study of the Complete Works* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1988), 3: 271–74.

the *textus receptus* still represents an invaluable reference given the highly fragmented nature of the disintombed version.

Some important argumentative features of the excavated *Wenzi* have been already explored. Paul van Els, for example, comes to the conclusion that the dialogic structure of the text and its frequent use of definitions make it comparable to “to a catechism, which summarizes the Christian doctrine in the form of questions and answers.”⁹ In van Els’ view, the definitive answers of the main protagonist, Master Wen, present “his view as a universal, objective definition and, hence, as the only possible interpretation of the term under discussion.”¹⁰ I will argue, however, that definitions are but one, although significant, part of the strategies Master Wen employs to persuade his interlocutor, King Ping 平王, of the validity of his philosophical standpoint. Usually, they function as a starting point in a rather complex development of argument. In particular, I disagree with van Els’ notion that “the text always offers positive definitions: it says what a term is, not what it is not.”¹¹ As I will show, negative definitions and the negative strands of argumentation represent one of the most characteristic features of the text.

I will begin with the issue of intertextuality. This issue is going to be discussed first because, on the one hand, the scope of the quoted texts in the *Wenzi* is truly remarkable and, on the other hand, the decision as to what sources to quote belongs to the most fundamental steps in the argumentative strategy of the author. Moreover, all quoted lines have their particular discursive structure, which becomes a part of the target text. I am going to argue that one feature is especially salient in the passages that the Bamboo-*Wenzi* shares with the other texts: the “antithetical parallelism” used to contrast a certain preposition with its semantic opposition. After this has been made clear, I will show how we can use the figure of “antithetical parallelism” to reconstruct the initial structure of the text before it was cast into the transmitted form. In my conclusion, I will try to provide an answer to the question of whether and how the specific choices of argument were related to philosophy of the text.

9 Paul van Els, “Persuasion through Definition: Argumentative Features of the Ancient *Wenzi*,” *Oriens Extremus* 45 (2005/06): 220.

10 Ibid.

11 Ibid, 234.

1. The *Wenzi* and the Problem of Intertextuality

The passage concluding the fifth chapter of the *textus receptus* is perhaps one of the most suitable sections to discuss this issue. This is the only passage built upon a conversation between Master Wen and King Ping, the original protagonists of the text. For convenience of analysis, I have labeled different textual units with capital letters:¹²

平王問文子曰：吾聞子得道於老聃，今賢人雖有道，而遭淫亂之世，以一人之權，而欲化久亂之民，其庸能乎？

文子曰：夫道德者，匡衰以為正，振亂以為治，化淫敗以為樸，淳德復生，天下安寧，要在一人。

A	人主者，民之師也，上者，下之儀也，上美之則下食之，上有道德則下有仁義，下有仁義則無淫亂之世矣。
B	積德成王，積怨成亡，積石成山，積水成海，不積而能成者，未之有也。
C	積道德者，天與之，地助之，鬼神輔之，鳳皇藉其庭，麒麟遊其郊，蛟龍宿其沼。
D	故以道治天下，天下之德也，無道治天下，天下之賊也。以一人與天下為讎，雖欲長久，不可得也，
E	堯舜以是昌，桀紂以是亡。 平王曰：寡人聞命矣。 ¹³

King Ping asked Master Wen: “I have heard that you, Master, received the Way from Lao Dan. Now you, a worthy man, are in possession of the Way, yet are encountering a decadent and chaotic world. If you had the power of a ruler and had the wish to transform the people having been long accustomed to chaos; how could that be accomplished?”

Master Wen replied: “It is that the one who possesses the Way and the Virtue [is competent to] reform decadent customs and put them straight, settle chaos and return to good governance, and to transform debauchery and degeneration into simplicity. To bring about pure virtue again and to put All-under-Heaven into peace and tranquility, the quintessential is the ruler.

¹² The characters marked with borders have parallels in the *Bamboo-Wenzi*.

¹³ Wang Liqi 王利器, ed., *Wenzi shuyi* 文子疏義 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 2000), 225.

A	The ruler is the <u>teacher</u> of the people. <u>Those above are the model for those below.</u> What those above savor, those below will eat. <u>When those above have the Way and Virtue, then those below will have benevolence and righteousness.</u> When those below have <u>benevolence and righteousness, then</u> there will be no decadent and chaotic world.
B	<u>Through accumulation of virtue one achieves kingly rule, through accumulation of resentment one vanishes.</u> <u>Through</u> accumulation of stones a mountain is accomplished, through accumulation of water a sea is accomplished. It has never been the case, that <u>something could be accomplished without accumulation.</u>
C	As for the one who accumulates the Way and the Virtue, Heaven gives to him, Earth helps him, ghosts and spirits support him. Phoenixes soar above his court, unicorns roam in his suburbs, and dragons dwell in his ponds.
D	Therefore, who governs All-under-Heaven with the Way is the <u>blessing</u> for All-under-Heaven. <u>Who governs All-under-Heaven with the “Absence of the Way” is the misfortune for All-under-Heaven.</u> <u>When the ruler makes All-under-Heaven his enemy, he will not succeed in establishing a long-lasting rule,</u> even if he wishes so.
E	This is why [virtuous kings like] <u>Yao</u> and Shun prospered and [hated tyrants like] Jie and Zhou vanished.” King Ping said: “I shall reverently listen to your instructions.” ¹⁴

When addressing the issue of intertextual parallels, it can first be said that the framework of this dialogue between King Ping and Master Wen, featuring a ruler who is confronted with the difficult mission of ordering the world (*tianxia* 天下), is far from being particular to the *Wenzi*. Such dialogues (mostly fictitious in nature) were very common in the pre-imperial and early Han philosophical literature.¹⁵ Some manuscripts, however, show a special affinity to the *Wenzi* as, for example, the *Guo Tong* 果童, a text belonging to the group of manuscripts identified as the *Huangdi sijing* 黃帝四經 discovered in Mawangdui 馬王堆:

14 Cf. Thomas Cleary, tr., *Wen-tzu: Understanding the Mysteries* (Boston & London: Shambala, 1992), 78.

15 See, for example, the fragments of manuscripts found in Yinqueshan that “stage” encounters between a number of rulers and ministers, Yinqueshan Hanmu zhujian zhengli xiaozu 銀雀山漢墓竹簡整理小組, ed., *Yinqueshan Hanmu zhujian*, vol.2 銀雀山漢墓竹簡(貳) (Beijing: Wenwu chubanshe, 2010), 169–80.

黃帝問四輔曰：唯余一人，兼有天下。今余欲畜而正之，均而平之，為之若何？果童對曰：不險則不可平，不謹則不可正。¹⁶

The Yellow Emperor [asked his Four] Assistants, saying, “It is only I, the one man, who possesses the world. Now I wish to educate and correct it, to balance and pacify it: how should I proceed?” Guo Tong replied, “If you are not thrifty, you cannot pacify it; if you are not trustworthy, you cannot correct it.”¹⁷

Facing the whole world alone and wishing to make it “upright” (*zheng* 正), the legendary Yellow Emperor sought advice from his counselors and articulated his dilemma in expressions similar to those King Ping used when addressing Master Wen. When turning our attention to the actual content of Master Wen’s advice, we can single out several thematic units in it. The first (A) deals with the role model function of the ruler in regard to his subordinates. The second (B) addresses the necessity to accumulate the Way (*dao*) and Virtue (*de* 德), the central values of the text. The third (C) shows how the accumulation of these values leads to support on the part of “higher” natural forces such as Heaven, spirits, *qilin* unicorns, etc. The next one (D) explains the sentiment of the people towards their sovereign depending on the latter’s commitment to the Way. Finally, Master Wen gives some historical examples to underpin the validity of his teaching (E).

Almost all of these units contain parallels to the other texts. Master Wen’s argument that the ruler is the teacher of common people presented in unit A can be found almost *verbatim* in several passages of the *Xunzi* 荀子, including the following lines from chapters 16 and 18:

且上者、下之師也。¹⁸

Furthermore, [...] the superior is the example to his subordinates.¹⁹

16 Guojia wenwuju guwenxian yanjiushi 國家文物局古文獻研究室, ed., *Mawangdui Hanmu boshu* 馬王堆漢墓帛書 (Beijing: Wenwu chubanshe, 1980), 66; Chen Guying 陳鼓應, ed., *Huangdi sijing jinzhujinyi* 帝四經今註今譯 (Beijing: Shangwu yinshuguan, 2007), 241.

17 Robin D. S. Yates, *Five Lost Classics: Tao, Huanglao, and Yin-Yang in Han China* (New York: Ballantine Books, 1997), 117. A similar setting is also present in another *Huangdi sijing* manuscript, the “Chengfa” 成法, *Mawangdui Hanmu boshu*, 72. For translation, see Yates, *Five Lost Classics*, 134–35.

18 Wang Xianqian 王先謙, ed., *Xunzi jijie* 荀子集解 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1988), 305.

19 John Knoblock, *Xunzi*, 2: 248.

主者、民之唱也，上者、下之儀也。²⁰

The ruler is to the people as a singing master who provides the tune; the superior is to his subordinates as the gnomon that provides the standard.²¹

The subsequent sentence of the same unit resembles a line appearing in both the *Mengzi* 孟子 and the “Ziyi” 緇衣.²² The related line from the *Mengzi* reads:

上有好者，下必有甚焉者矣。²³

When someone above shows a preference for anything, there is certain to be someone below who will outdo him.²⁴

Unit B dealing with the issue of “accumulation” (*ji* 積) begins with two sentences that are similar to what can be found in yet another *Huangdi sijing* manuscript, the “Ci xiong jie” 雌雄節：

故德積者昌，
殃積者亡。²⁵

Therefore, he who piles up potency flourishes;
he who accumulates [calamities] perishes.²⁶

20 Wang Xianqian, *Xunzi jijie*, 321.

21 Knoblock, *Xunzi*, 3: 33.

22 There are several versions of the “Ziyi” available now. It is a part of the transmitted *Liji* 禮記, the tomb library discovered in Guodian 郭店 and the corpus of excavated texts purchased and published by the Shanghai Museum. For a comparison between these three versions, see Edward Shaughnessy, *Rewriting Early Chinese Texts* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2006), 64–130. The “Ziyi” line that is similar to the *Wenzi* reads: “If the superior loves this thing, among the inferiors there will certainly be those who are more extreme about it” 上是物，下必有甚者矣. Shaughnessy, *op. cit.* 104.

23 Zhu Xi 朱熹, ed., *Mengzi jizhu* 孟子集注, in *Sishu zhangju jizhu* 四書章句集注 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1988), 253.

24 D. C. Lau, *Mencius*, rev. ed. (Hong Kong: Chinese University Press, 2003), 103.

25 *Mawangdui Hanmu boshu*, 70; Chen Guying, *Huangdi sijing*, 271.

26 Yates, *Five Lost Classics*, 131.

What then follows has counterparts in several chapters of the *Xunzi* and the *Da Dai Liji* 大戴禮記.²⁷ A passage from the chapter “Quan xue” 勸學 that appears in both works states, for instance:²⁸

積土成山，風雨興焉；
積水成淵，蛟龍生焉 [.....]
不積小流，無以成江海。²⁹

If you accumulate enough earth to build up a high hill, rain and wind will flourish because of it.

If you accumulate enough water to fill a chasm, dragons and scaly dragons will be born within it ...

[If] you do not accumulate small streams, you will have no way to fill a river or sea.³⁰

The next unit, C, begins with sentences that, with slight deviations, can be found in a number of different texts. The *Guanzi* 管子, for example, reads:³¹

鬼神助之，天地與之，舉事而有福。³²

[The] spirits will help him, and Heaven and Earth will bestow favors upon him. He will meet with good fortune whenever he initiates an undertaking.³³

27 For the reading of the counterpart from the *Da Dai Liji*, see Ho Che Wah 何志華 et al., eds., *Wenzi yu xian Qin liang Han dianji chongjian ziliao huibian* 《文子》與先秦兩漢典籍重見資料彙編 (Hong Kong: The Chinese University of Hong Kong, 2010), 156.

28 As for the possible direction of borrowing between the *Xunzi* and *Da Dai Liji*, which share a number of passages, John Knoblock came to the conclusion that “in every case the *Da Dai* [was] secondary”. See Knoblock, *Xunzi*, 1:125. However, this conclusion provides little help in elucidating the nature of the relation between the *Wenzi* and the two works.

29 Wang Xianqian, *Xunzi jijie*, 7.

30 Knoblock, *Xunzi*, 1: 138.

31 Also the bamboo manuscript “Wu yi” 五議 found in Yinqueshan contains similar lines stating: “Heaven and Earth bestow favors upon him, the spirits and ghosts all support him” 天地與之，鬼神相助. See *Yinqueshan Hanmu Zhujian*, vol.2, 141.

32 “Xingshijie” 形勢解, in Li Xiangfeng 黎翔鳳, ed. & comm., *Guanzi jiaozhu* 管子校注 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 2004), 1173.

33 W. Allyn Rickett, *Guanzi: Political, Economic, and Philosophical Essays From Early China: A Study and Translation* (Taipei: Cheng & Tsui, 2001), 1: 69.

The description of the ideal social and natural harmony that appears thereafter was even more common. We find formulations similar to it in as many works as the *Lüshi chungiu* 呂氏春秋,³⁴ *Kongzi jiaiyu* 孔子家語,³⁵ *Shiji* 史記,³⁶ *Shuo yuan* 說苑,³⁷ and, repeatedly in the *Huainanzi* 淮南子. The latter, for example, depicted the reign of the legendary Yellow Emperor in the following terms:

鳳皇翔於庭，
麒麟遊於郊。³⁸

Phoenixes soared above the [royal] courtyards,
The *qilin* wandered in the suburbs.³⁹

Unit D opens with sentences strongly reminiscent of the famous lines from *Laozi* 60 and 65. The *Wenzi*'s allusion to *Laozi* 65 is closer to the early Han versions of the latter than to the transmitted text. Hence, I quote the respective *Laozi* line based on the reading of Mawangdui *Laozi* A (*jia* 甲):

以道蒞天下，其鬼不神。

When the empire is ruled in accordance with the way,
The spirits lose their potencies.⁴⁰

故以知知邦，
邦之賊也；
以不知知邦，
邦之德也。

34 “If you overturn birds’ nests and break their eggs, phoenixes will not arrive. If you cut open wild beasts and eat their fetuses, unicorns will not come. If you dry up marshes and strand the fish in them, dragons will not appear” 夫覆巢毀卵，則鳳凰不至；剖獸食胎，則麒麟不來；乾澤涸漁，則龜龍不往。Chen Qiyou 陳奇猷，annot., *Lüshi chungiu xin jiaoshi* 呂氏春秋新校釋 (Shanghai: Shanghai guji chubanshe, 2001), 683. John Knoblock and Jeffrey Riegel, *The Annals of Lü Buwei* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2000), 284.

35 *Kongzi jiaiyu*, *Wenyuange siku quanshu* 文淵閣四庫全書 (Taipei: Taiwan shangwu yinshuguan, 1986), vol. 128: 13.21a.

36 *Shiji*, 47.1926.

37 *Shuoyuan*, *Wenyuange Siku quanshu*, vol. 696: 13.2b.

38 He Ning 何寧, ed., *Huainanzi jishi* 淮南子集釋 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1998), 478.

39 John S. Major, tr., “Surveying Obscurities,” *Huainanzi* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2010), 224.

40 Lau, *Tao Te Ching*, 237.

Thus to understand a state through knowledge will be to the detriment of the state; and to understand a state through ignorance will be to the good of the state.⁴¹

The subsequent “block” of the same unit expressing the idea that a ruler should not estrange the world from himself has a clear parallel to the “Jie Lao” 解老 chapter of the *Hanfeizi* 韓非子 :

眾人多而聖人寡 [.....] ,
今舉動而與天下之為讎 ,
非全身長生之道也。⁴²

Ordinary people are numerous while sages are few. [...] Indeed, to initiate actions that will make enemies of the world is not the Way to keep your body whole or prolong your life.⁴³

This parallel is of a special interest, because it could be seen as providing a clue for a possible connection between the *Laozi* exegesis as undertaken by the authors of the *Hanfeizi* and *Wenzi*. However, we have to be aware of the fact that, while in the *Wenzi* these lines are connected with what resembles chapter 64, in the *Hanfeizi* they are used to explain the lines “be square-edged but do not scrape, [...] shine but do not dazzle” 方而不割 [.....] 光而不耀 from *Laozi* 58.

Concluding his speech, Master Wen offers historical examples to provide some factual evidence for the efficacy of his teaching. However, once again, “his” words are akin to what can be found in a number of ancient Chinese sources including the *Huainanzi*, reading:

堯舜所以昌、
桀紂所以亡者 [.....]⁴⁴

41 Ibid., 237. As for the differences between the transmitted and excavated versions of the *Laozi*, in the main received versions of the text the opposed terms are *zei* 賊 (detriment) and *fu* 福 (boon). Besides, the opposition between the first and third sentence is created there by placing negation in front of grapheme *yi* 以 instead of *zhi* 智 as it is the case in all excavated version as well as in the *Wenzi*. For the reading of the transmitted version, see Lau, *Tao Te Ching*, 97.

42 Wang Xianshen 王先慎, ed., *Hanfeizi jijie* 韓非子集解 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1998), 138.

43 Sarah Queen, “*Han Feizi* and the Old Master: A Comparative Analysis and Translation of *Han Feizi* Chapter 20, ‘Jie Lao,’ and Chapter 21, ‘Yu Lao,’ in *Dao Companions to Chinese Philosophy*, ed. Paul R. Goldin (Dordrecht et. al: Springer, 2013), 233.

44 He Ning, *Huainanzi jishi*, 695.

The reason why Yao and Shun flourished, while Jie and Zhou perished, is...⁴⁵

A juxtaposition of both *Wenzi* versions with the just mentioned texts gives us the following picture:

Table 1: The Parallels Between the textus receptus, the Excavated Wenzi and Other Early Chinese Manuscripts

		<i>Received Wenzi</i>	<i>Bamboo-Wenzi</i> ⁴⁶	<i>Other texts</i> ⁴⁷	
A	1.	人主者，民之師也， 上者，下之儀也。	2208 「之師也， 上者，下之義法也。」	主者、民之唱也， 上者、下之儀也。	XZ
	2.				
	3.	上美之，則下食之。		上有好者，下必有甚焉者矣。	MZ, ZY
B	4.	上有道德，則下有仁義， 下有仁義，則無淫亂之 世矣。	0575 「德，則下有仁義， 下有仁義，則治矣。」		
	5.				
	6.				
7.	積怨成亡，	積德成王，	殃積者亡。		
8.	積石成山，	積」	積土成山，風雨興焉；	XZ, DDLJ	
9.	積水成海，	2315 「天之道也，	積水成淵，蛟龍生焉 [...]		
10.	不積而成者，未之有也。	不積而成者寡矣。	不積小流，無以成江海。		
10½.		臣〔聞〕」			
C	11.	積道德者， 天與之， 地助之， 鬼神輔之。	5690 「有道之君， 天舉之， 地勉之， 鬼神輔」	鬼神助之， 天地與之。	GZ, WY
	12.				
	13.				
	14.				
	15.	鳳皇藉其庭，		鳳皇翔於庭，	LSCQ,
16.	麒麟遊其郊，		麒麟遊於郊。	HNZ,	
17.	蛟龍宿其沼。			SJ	

45 Compare the translation in Sarah A. Queen and John S. Major, tr., “The Ruler’s Techniques,” *The Huainanzi*, 334.

46 In the transcription of the excavated manuscript, the symbols “「” and “」” are used only here to signify the scope of respective bamboo fragments, while the four-digit inventory numbers were assigned to them during the excavation process.

47 XZ stands for *Xunzi*, MZ for *Mengzi*, ZY for *Ziyi*, CXJ for *Ci xiong jie*, DDLJ for *Da Dai Liji*, WY for *Wu yi*, LSCQ for *Lüshi chungiu*, HNZ for *Huainanzi*, SJ for *Shiji*, LZ for *Laozi* and HFZ for *Hanfeizi*.

D	18.	故以道蒞天下，	2442「之德也。 以毋道立者， 天下之賊也。 以〔口六曰君〕」	故以知知邦， 邦之賊也； 以不知知邦， 邦之德也。	LZ
	19.	天下之德也，			
	20.	無道蒞天下，			
	21.	天下之賊也。			
	21½.				
	22.	以一人與天下為讎，	0579「一人任與天下為讎， 其能久乎。」	眾人多而聖人寡 [...] 今舉動而與天下之為讎， 非全身長生之道也。	HFZ
	23.	雖欲長久，不可得也，			
E	24.	堯舜以是昌，	此堯」	堯舜所以昌、 桀紂所以亡者 [...]	HNZ
	25.	桀紂以是亡。			

As it can be seen, from the above 25 lines of the *textus receptus* only lines 4 and 5 have no equivalents in other texts. The degree and nature of congruence between the *Wenzi* and the respective texts, however, varies from unit to unit. While some of them seem to be almost identical with their counterparts from the other texts (lines 1–2), the others make the impression of paraphrasing and readjusting (lines 3, 8–10 and 22–23). Each thematic unit comprises a different number of the single “building blocks” to borrow the term coined by William Boltz.⁴⁸ In unit C, for example, there are two such distinct blocks (lines 11–14 and 15–17), identifiable through the particular sentence structure and the specific rhyme⁴⁹ (rhyme *yu* 魚 in the former to which the graphs *yu* 與 [**laʔ*], *zhu* 助 [**dzrah*] and *fu* 輔 [**baʔ*] belong, and rhyme group *xiao* 宵 in the latter with the characters *jiao* 郊 [**krâu*] and *zhao* 沼 [**tauɦ*]).⁵⁰ The high frequency of the intertextual parallels seems to confirm Boltz’s observation that “the practice of compiling texts from a reservoir of preexisting materials, combined with whatever newly composed material was called for, was not just widespread but perhaps the norm”⁵¹ in ancient China. The fact that the

48 William G. Boltz, “The Composite Nature of Early Chinese Texts,” in *Text and Ritual in Early China*, 70.

49 For rhymes in the *Wenzi*, see Jiang Yougao 江有誥, *Yinxue shishu* 音學十書 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1993), 199–210.

50 Ancient pronunciation is given according to Axel Schuessler, *Minimal Old Chinese and Later Han Chinese*, Minimal Old Chinese (OCM) represents those amendments of Bernhard Karlgren’s (1889–1978) Old Chinese (ca. 1000 to 200 B.C.) pronunciation system that are accepted by most modern scholars. For Karlgren’s work, see *Grammata Serica Recensa* (Stockholm: Museum of Far Eastern Antiquities, 1957).

51 Boltz, “The Composite Nature,” 70.

Wenzi often has a different reading than other sources also goes well with the conclusion by Paul Fisher that in the early Chinese philosophical literature the borrowed material was “quite often [...] intentionally modified to fit a new context and to prove a new point.”⁵² In the case of the *Wenzi*, the point to prove was evidently that a ruler could order his state only by complying with the principles of the Way and Virtue.

Given variances in the popularity and status of the involved works, it stands to reason that their usage was motivated by different considerations. When, for instance, the similarities involve (a number of) relatively unknown sources (lines 6–7, 11–14) it is entirely conceivable that the main factor was merely the convenience of deploying the already extant textual material. However the quotation of the *Laozi* and, possibly, *Xunzi*,⁵³ seem to have had the aim of increasing the authority of the text through a reference to the highly acclaimed sources.⁵⁴ The employment of a well-known Confucian text⁵⁵ is just as remarkable for a daoist text of the Early Han-Dynasty like the *Wenzi* as the manner in which the *Laozi* is treated, at least when we compare it with the two most famous early examples of *Laozi* exegesis: the *Hanfeizi* and *Huainanzi*.⁵⁶ In sum, the intertextual relations of the *Wenzi* appear to be of a much complex nature than was assumed before.⁵⁷

When turning to the structure of the given passage, we discover that it is only in the case of units D and E that the bamboo fragments can lend some support to the given arrangement of the *textus receptus*. In all other instances, there are indications that the latter does not reflect the initial arrangement

52 Paul Fisher, “Intertextuality in Early Chinese Master-Texts: Shared Narratives in *Shi Zi*,” *Asia Major (Third Series)*, 22.2(2009):34.

53 While the popularity of the *Laozi* during the beginning of the Han Dynasty belongs to the most well known facts in the Chinese intellectual history, also the *Xunzi* was at the peak of its influence during that time. See Knoblock, *Xunzi*, 1: 39.

54 This corresponds to the reasons two and three in Fischer’s categorization. See Fischer, “Intertextuality,” 9.

55 As the examples of the “Wuxing” 五行 and *Xiaojing* 孝經 show, the *Xunzi* was not the only Confucian text to be quoted in the Bamboo-*Wenzi*.

56 For the *Laozi* quotations in the *Hanfeizi*, see Sarah Queen, “*Han Feizi* and the Old Master,” 200–5.

57 van Els, “Persuasion through Definition,” 223, claims, for example, that the importance of the *Laozi* as the external source for the *Wenzi* is underscored through “the near-absence of intertextual links with other texts.”

of the text faithfully. Consider, for example, the conjunction between units B and C (line 11). While in the transmitted text they are connected with the expression to “accumulate the Way and Virtue” (*ji dao de* 積道德), the excavated counterpart does not contain such a connecting element. This fact can have several interpretations, including that “accumulation” in unit B was, while originally stemming from another part of the text, inserted here by the compiler of the *textus receptus*. The traces of his editorial activity can be possibly also seen in unit D that, in the transmitted version, consist out of two different “blocks” linked together with rhyme *zhi* 職 (*de* 德 [**tək*], *zei* 賊 [**dzək*], *de* 得 [**tək*]). By contrast, in the excavated version these “blocks” are not only not connected by means of rhyme,⁵⁸ they are separated by the phrase *yi* [X] *liu yue jun* 以 [口六曰君].

Although a reconstruction of the macro structure of the argument was not possible in the above case, it still became apparent that on the level of particular units the text employs a number of rhetoric devices, such as the already mentioned parallel sentence structure and rhymes, to develop its argument. Of course, given the density of the external material the majority of these strategies appear to be borrowed together with the textual material. It is also true of the “antithetical parallelism” that contrasts a certain preposition with its semantic opposition appearing in lines 10, 20–21, 25 and, to give an example, in the both sentences *ji de cheng wang*, *ji yuan cheng wang* 積德成王，積怨成亡 (lines 6 and 7). While soon returning to this form of the argument in two antithetical strains, at this juncture, I would like to point to the only *Wenzi* lines (4 and 5) without parallels to other texts. The related bamboo strip reads:

0575 { 上有道 }⁵⁹ 德，則下有仁義，下有仁義，則治矣。
 {If the superiors have the Way and} Virtue, then the subordinates will have
 benevolence and righteousness. If the subordinates have benevolence and
 righteousness, then there will be order!

This passage shows the chain repetition pattern — the end of each line is repeated in the beginning of the next — that is called *sorites*, *anadiplosis*⁶⁰ or,

58 There, both lines of the second “block” seem to be connected by means of the irregular rhyme *you* 幽 — *zhi* 之 involving characters *chou* 讎 (**du*) and *jiu* 久 (**ku?*).

59 I use braces to indicate characters that in my view appeared in the bamboo text.

60 Richard A. Lanham, *A Handlist of Rhetorical Terms* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1991), 10.

in the Chinese works on rhetoric, *dingzhen* 頂真.⁶¹ Formally, it can be depicted as: S1 則 S2, S2 則 S3, S3 則 S4, etc. In the ancient Chinese philosophical literature, sorites was one of the most common forms of argument and, at times, reached considerable length, as in the following well-known line from the Confucian Classic *Daxue* 大學:

知止而後有定，定而後能靜，靜而後能安，安而後能慮，慮而後能得。

The point where to rest being known, the object of pursuit is then determined; and, that being determined, a calm unperturbedness may be attained to. To that calmness there will succeed a tranquil repose. In that repose there may be careful deliberation, and that deliberation will be followed by the attainment of the desired end.⁶²

As regards its specific function, Christoph Harbsmeier argues that sorites allowed “the Chinese thinkers to establish indirect links between different features of the world.”⁶³ While connecting both ends of the claim (here: *zhi zhi* 知止 and *de* 得) certainly was an important feature of the sorites, in my opinion, it should not be overlooked that it also establishes a direct causal relationship between its adjacent members, creating a semantic hierarchy and rendering each preceding member a precondition for what follows. Unlike in the long *Daxue* chain, the bamboo strip 0575 names only two preconditions for the establishment of the final goal, “order” (S3), namely, the possession of the Way and Virtue through the superiors (S1), and the possession of benevolence and righteousness through the subordinates (S2). The argumentation contained in this strip can be thus summarized as:

S1 → S2, S2 → S3 (order)

As we will see later, the author defines the number and the nature of the necessary conditions for achieving his political goals in a similar fashion throughout the text.

61 Tang Songbo 唐松波, Huang Jianlin 黃建霖, *Hanyu xiucige da cidian* 漢語修辭格大辭典 (Beijing: Zhongguo guoji guangbo chubanshe, 1989), 345–46.

62 James Legge, *The Chinese Classics*, vol. I (Taipei: SMC Publishing INC., 1991), 356–57.

63 Christoph Harbsmeier, *Science and Civilisation in China, Volume 7, Part 1: Language and Logic in Traditional China* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 282.

It is noteworthy that among the fragments of the *Bamboo-Wenzi* there is a strip that also seems to put forward its argumentation by means of a sorites in three steps, with the first two clauses resembling negative formulations of the just mentioned preconditions for the establishing of order. This strip reads:

- 2248 { 上毋 } 道德，則下毋仁義之心，下毋仁義之 { 心，則亂。 }
 {If the superiors do not have} Way and Virtue, the subordinates will not have a benevolent and righteous heart. If the subordinates do not have benevolent and righteous {heart, then there will be chaos}.

If my reconstruction of this line is correct, then the text seemed to contain two antithetical lines of argument (0575 versus 2248) contrasted by means of negation applied in the second strand (*you* 有 versus *wu* 毋) as well as their final elements: the antonyms “order” (*zhi* 治) and “chaos” (*luan* 亂). We have already seen that the *Wenzi* frequently uses antithetical parallelism. The present case that employs negation as a means of creating opposition has affinities to the form of this parallelism that Joachim Gentz calls “parallelism in the negative mode.”⁶⁴ With S4 standing for “chaos,” this strand can be represented as:

$$-S1 \rightarrow -S2, -S2 \rightarrow S4 \text{ (chaos)}$$

While it is not certain whether or not strips 2248 and 0575 originally constituted a textual unit, other bamboo fragments contain further (nearly) parallel formulations that are connected to the issue of order and chaos. Here are two examples:

- 0717 矣。故有道者立天下，則天下治。
 If someone in possession of the Way governs All-under-Heaven, then All-under-Heaven will be ordered.
- 0695 [治矣]，毋道而立之者，則亂。故治 [亂]
 ... order! If someone does not possess the Way yet still governs it (All-under-Heaven), then there will be chaos. Therefore, order and chaos ...

64 Gentz quotes the following sentence from the *Kongzi jiyu* 孔子家語 as an example for this figure: “The Way is that by which moral power is illuminated. Moral power is that by which the Way is revered. Therefore *without* moral power *it is not* revered. *Without* the Way *it is not* illuminated” (emphasis added) 夫道者，所以明德也；德者，所以尊道也。是以非德道不尊，非道德不明。 See Gentz, “Defining Boundaries and Relations of Textual Units: Examples from the Literary Tool-Kit of Early Chinese Argumentation,” in *Literary Forms of Argument in Early China*, 147.

Arguing in terms of “order” and “chaos” can be seen as a valuable clue for the creation time of the *Wenzi* as this type of argument was especially common “in texts from the end of the Zhanguo to the end of the reign of Han Wudi.”⁶⁵ It is apparent from these examples that the *Wenzi* understands the possession of the Way through the person in power as the main prerequisite for the establishment of order. It is this connection of the central notions of the work to the issue of order/disorder that, in my opinion, was the most crucial element in the argumentative strategy of the text.

Summarizing this section, we can establish that the *Wenzi* belongs among the Early Chinese manuscripts with a very high density of intertextual parallels. However, this pronounced eclecticism does not hinder the text to develop its own philosophical agenda by linking the notions of the Way and Virtue to the question of successful governance. It seems that the use of “negative parallelism” played an important role in providing additional evidence to the argumentation of the text. So far, we have seen only simple examples of how the text used positive and negative strands of argumentation as techniques of persuasion. With the help of the *textus receptus*, which, as we have seen, is far from faithful in conveying the contents and structure of the earlier versions, we can attempt to reconstruct more complex cases of such argumentations.

2. Argument in Antithetical Parallels

Below is the paragraph of the fifth chapter of the *textus receptus* that contains a discussion on the main principles of governance. Also here, the text consists out of several distinct thematic units that are labeled with different letters:

文子問政。老子曰：

A	御之以道，養之以德，無示以賢，無加以力。
B	損而執一，無處可利，無見可欲，「方而不割，廉而不劌」， ⁶⁶ 無矜無伐。
C	御之以道，則民附，養之以德，則民服，無示以賢，則民足，無加以力，則民樸。
D	無示以賢者，儉也，無加以力，不敢也，下以聚之，賂以取之，儉以自全，不敢自安。
E	不下，則離散，弗養，則背叛，示以賢，則民爭，加以力，則民怨。

65 Geoffrey Lloyd, “The Techniques of Persuasion and the Rhetoric of Disorder (*luan* 亂) in Late Zhanguo and Western Han Texts,” in *China’s Early Empires: A Re-appraisal*, eds. Michael Nylan and Michael Loewe (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 451.

66 *Laozi*, 58.

F	民離散，則國勢衰，民背叛，則上無威，人爭，則輕為非，下怨其上，則位危。
G	四者誠修，正道幾矣。 ⁶⁷

Master Wen asked about governing. Laozi said:

A	Guide them (people) with the Way, nourish them with the Virtue, do not show your abilities, do not employ force.
B	Diminish and hold fast to the One. Do not dwell in what might bring profit, do not display what might elicit desire. Be square but do not cut, have corners but do not clip. Have no pride nor be conceited.
C	If you guide them with the Way, then people will adhere to you. If you nourish them with the Virtue, then people will obey. If you do not show your abilities, then people will be content. If you do not employ force, then people will be simpleminded.
D	Not showing your abilities is restraint. Not employing force is not daring. Through lowering yourself you gather them; through being generous you win them; through restraining yourself you preserve yourself, and through not-daring you secure yourself.
E	If you do not lower yourself, then people will leave and disperse. If you do not nourish them, then people will turn their backs on you and rebel. If you show your abilities, then people will fight. If you employ force, then people will be resentful.
F	If people leave and disperse, then the strength of the state will vanish. If people turn their backs on you and rebel, then the superiors will have no authority. If people fight, then they will take wrongdoing lightly. If the subordinates resent their superiors, then rank will entail danger.
G	When these four are sincerely cultivated, the upright Way is near.” ⁶⁸

The parallels in the Bamboo-*Wenzi* are:

0885	平王曰。為正（政）奈何。文〔子曰。御之以道，□〕 King Ping asked: “How do you make (people) upright?” Master Wen answered: “Guide them with the Way, [X]
0707	之以德，勿視以賢，勿加以力，□以□□ ... them with the Virtue. Do not show your abilities. Do not employ force. [X] with [X][X]
2205	□〔言。平王曰。御〕 [X] words.” King Ping said: “To guide ...

⁶⁷ Wang Liqi, *Wenzi shuyi*, 242–43.

⁶⁸ Compare the translation in Cleary, *The Wen-tzu*, 72–73.

- 2324 口口以賢，則民自足，毋加以力，則民自
[X][X] your abilities, then people will of themselves become content. If you do not employ force, then people will of themselves become ...
- 0876 可以治國。不御以道，則民離散。不養
... through this the state can be ordered. If you do not guide (them) with the Way, then people will leave and disperse. If you do not nourish...
- 0826 則民倍（背）反（叛），視之賢，則民疾爭，加之以 ||
... then people will turn their backs on you and rebel. If you show them your abilities, then people will fight violently. If you employ ... against them ||
- 0898 則民苛。兆民⁶⁹離散，則國執（勢）衰。民倍（背）
... then people will become ruthless. If myriads of people leave and disperse, the strength of the state will vanish. If people turn their backs on you...
- 0886 [上位危。平王曰。行此四者何如。文子]
... the superior position will be in danger.” King Ping asked: “How do you practice these four?” Master Wen ...

Just as in the above passage, also here the *Wenzi* shows close parallels to a number of other texts. The following lines from the *Guanzi* are strongly reminiscent of the *Wenzi* as presented in units A and C:⁷⁰

畜之以道，養之以德。畜之以道，則民和，養之以德，則民合。⁷¹
Rear [your people] in accordance with the Way. Nurture them with the Power. If reared in accordance with the Way, the people may be harmonized. If nurtured with the Power, the people may be united.⁷²

The *Wenzi*'s unit C discussing how the population of the state will become content and simpleminded in the wake of the ruler's implementation of policies congruent with the Way also resembles the well-known lines from *Laozi* 57:

69 Following Zhang Fengqian 張豐乾, *Chutu wenxian yu Wenzi gongan* 出土文獻與《文子》公案 (Beijing: Shehui kexue wenxian chubanshe, 2007), 24. I read the characters *zhao* 兆 and *min* 民 together yielding the expression *zhao min* 兆民 (myriads of people) that was very common in classical Chinese.

70 As first pointed out by Zhang Fengqian, *Chutu wenxian yu Wenzi gongan*, 103.

71 “Youguan” 幼官, in Li Xiangfeng, *Guanzi jiaozhu*, 176.

72 Rickett, *Guanzi*, 1: 190.

我無為也，而民自化。

我好靜，而民自正。

我無事，民自富。

我欲不欲，而民自樸。

I take no action and the people are transformed of themselves;

I prefer stillness and the people are rectified of themselves;

I am not meddlesome and the people prosper of themselves;

I am free from desire and the people of themselves become simple like the uncarved block.⁷³

Further counterparts can be found in the lines depicting the negative consequences of the ruler's neglect of the correct guidelines of governing (units E and F). The most obvious one is the *Laozi's* admonition that valuing the worthies will make people contentious 不尚賢，使民不爭。⁷⁴ The other sources involved are also already familiar to us: it is the *Hanfeizi* raising similar concerns about the betrayal (*bei pan* 背叛) and resentment (*yuan* 怨)⁷⁵ on part of the common people and the loss of authority (*zhu shi wei* 主失威) and endangerment of those in power (*shang wei wei* 上位危),⁷⁶ as well as the *Guanzi* containing the expression “to take wrongdoing lightly” (*qing wei fei* 輕為非).⁷⁷ Again, the presence of parallels does not automatically speak for the existence of direct interdependence of the texts involved as the possibility of borrowing from a common source remains. Moreover, the high degree of congruity with other texts did not raise difficulties for the author of the *Wenzi* to make his own philosophical point. While echoing the structure of the *Guanzi* quote in units A and C, the text develops a far more complex argument.

73 Lau, *Tao Te Ching*, 83–84.

74 Ho Che Wah, *Wenzi yu xian Qin liang Han dianji chongjian ziliao huibian*, 149.

75 “Ba shuo” 八說, in Wang Xianshen, *Hanfeizi jijie*, 428: “When ill will is revealed, the inferiors will hate the superiors; when arbitrary censure prevails, the people will rebel” 憎心見，則下怨其上，妄誅，則民將背叛。See Wen-Kuei Liao, tr., *The Complete Works of Han Fei Tzu* (London: Arthur Probsthian), 2 vols., 1939, 1959.

76 “Wai chu shuo you shang” 外儲說右上, in Wang Xianshen, *Hanfeizi jijie*, 325: “If the subject offends his ruler, then the sovereign will lose his authority; if the inferior disobeys his superior, then the superior's status will be endangered” 臣乘君則主失威，下尚校則上位危。See Liao, *The Complete Works of Han Fei Tzu*.

77 “Mingfa jie” 明法解, in Li Xiangfeng, *Guanzi jiaozhu*, 1215: “If the state has no clear laws, the hundred surnames will treat doing wrong lightly” 主無術數，則群臣易欺之，國無明法，則百姓輕為非。See Rickett, *Guanzi*, 2: 163.

When putting aside unit B that is strongly influenced by the *Laozi* and has been suspected of being a latter addition,⁷⁸ the logical organization of the given passage of the *textus receptus* can be represented as comprising the following four steps:

Table 2: The Logical Organization of the Segment 5–13 of the *textus receptus*

I	A	御之以道， 養之以德， 無示以賢， 無加以力。	(職) (職)
II	C	御之以道，則民附， 養之以德，則民服， 無示以賢，則民足， 無加以力，則民樸。	(屋) (屋)
		PS	NS
	E	不下，則離散， 弗養，則背叛， 示以賢，則民爭， 加以力，則民怨。	(元) (元) (元) (元)
III	D	無示以賢者，儉也， 無加以力，不敢也。 下以聚之， 賂以取之， 儉以自全， 不敢自安。	(談) (談) (侯) (侯) (元) (元)
	F	民離散，則國勢衰， 民背叛，則上無威， 人爭，則輕為非， 下怨其上，則位危。	(微) (微) (微) (微)
IV	G	四者誠修，正道幾矣。	(微)

As can be seen, in step I (unit A), the speaker (here: Laozi) identifies the four principles for successful governance. After that, he goes on to depict their positive effects on people 民 in unit C. This unit commences the positive strand (PS). There is yet another, negative, strand (NS) initiated by unit E, appearing later in the text and mirroring unit C. In it, the nonapplication of the four principles expressed by means of negation (*yang* 養 versus *fu yang* 弗養) is depicted as having disastrous consequences on the people, which are articulated as antonyms to what have been said in unit C. The respective pairs of antonyms are thus “clinging to” (*fu* 附) and “departing” (*li* 離), “obeying” (*fu* 服) and “rebellious” (*pan* 叛), etc. Both units are distinguished through the

78 Chao Fulin 晁福林, “Dingzhou Hanjian *Wenzi Daode pian yice*” 定州漢簡《文子·道德》篇臆測, *Zhongguo lishi bowuguan guankan* 中國歷史博物館館刊 2000.2: 81; Zhang Fengqian, *Zhujian Wenzhi tanwei* 竹簡《文子》探微 (PhD diss., Graduate School of Chinese Academy of Social Sciences, 2002), 40.

characteristic rhymes: rhyme group *wu* 屋 (*zu* 足 [**tsok*] and *pu* 樸 [**phrok*]) in unit C and rhyme group *yuan* 元 (*san* 散 [**sâns*], *pan* 叛 [**bâns*] and *yuan* 怨 [**ʔons*]) in unit E.

The overall structure of the positive and negative strands of step II can be thus formally depicted as

$$S1 \rightarrow S2 (C) \quad \text{and} \quad -S1 \rightarrow S4 (E),$$

with S2 and S4 being antonyms and all the respective elements including not just one, as in the above case, but four clauses. This and the fact that the opposite units (C and E) are presented not directly one after another, but with the interception of unit (D) have the consequence that the given argument can at best be followed when presented in written form, when there is a possibility of going back and forth between the single blocks and comparing what has been argued.

Now, when following the development of the negative strand, we see that the dire situation among the people (S4) is taken up again in F and depicted as leading to disastrous consequences for the state and its leaders (S5). Strip 0898, appearing in both units (E and F), shows that this development of the argument was indeed given in the bamboo text. In the context of the whole passage, the negative strand of the argument (NS) can thus be represented as:

$$-S1 \rightarrow S4 (E), S4 \rightarrow S5 (F)$$

Just as in the example of the sorites from the above section, we are again dealing with an argumentation chain that is built upon three elements and is completed in two steps. The first element (-S1) does again contain the notions Way and Virtue, while the second (S4) again addresses the reaction of the subordinates. Finally, the third element (S5), the textual coherence of which is again reinforced through the use of rhymes — here: rhyme *wei* 微 ([*shuai*], 衰 [**srui*], *wei* 威 [**ʔui*], *fei* 非 [**pəi*]) — discusses the ensuing impact on the overall situation in the state.

Until now, the passage under review has shown a high degree of organization. Thus, it surprises that the link between “positive” units C and D does not reflect that between the “negative” units E and F. Unit D comprises two different subunits, one (D1) consisting out of the definitions of “not showing abilities” (*wu shi yi xian* 無示以賢) and “not employing force” (*wu jia yi li* 無加以力) and the other (D2) containing four tetrasyllabic lines. Juxtaposing units C and D, we get the following picture:

C	D1	D2
御之以道則民附，	下以聚之，
養之以德則民服，	賂以取之，
無示以賢則民足，	無示以賢者，儉也，	儉以自全，
無加以力則民樸。	無加以力，不敢也	不敢自安。

As it can be clearly seen here, the transmitted text is incomplete at this juncture, apparently missing two definitions in unit D1.⁷⁹ A comparison between the present elements of the three units suggests that the definitions in question must have been “guiding them with the Way is lowering yourself” (*yu zhi yi dao, xia ye* 御之以道，下也) and “nurturing them with the Virtue is being generous” (*yang zhi yi de, lu ye* 養之以德，賂也).⁸⁰ The important point that the former definition was present in the Bamboo-*Wenzi* can be seen from the following strip:

2364 [仁]。文子曰。口夫御以道者，下之也者
 ... benevolence.” Master Wen said: “[X] now, to guide with the Way is to lower yourself in front of them”

The definition of the guidance with the Way as “lowering oneself” (*xia* 下) certainly played an important role in the text, for it creates a link between the political and cosmological levels of the work.⁸¹ However, its appearance as a response to King Ping’s inquiry related to “benevolence” (*ren* 仁) shows that in the arrangement of the Bamboo-*Wenzi* this definition (as all other elements of D1) most likely did not follow unit C. The same also goes for subunit D2, given its close ties to D1. What can then be said about the original arrangement and content of the textual unit (D), assuming it really existed? The organization of the negative strand suggests that it could have contained four lines describing the positive ramifications of the implication of the Way and Virtue on the state, the actual topic of the whole passage. And, indeed, there is some evidence for this assumption in the following strip:

79 Ding Yuanzhi 丁原植 recognized the fact that two definitions are missing without attempting to reconstruct them. See Ding, *Wenzi ziliao tansuo* 《文子》資料探索 (Taipei: Wanjuanlou, 1999), 253.

80 As already suggested by Zhang Fengqian, *Chutu wenxian yu Wenzi gongan*, 42.

81 The same is also true of the definition “not showing your abilities, is restraining” (*jian* 儉). The related line of the *Wenzi* reads: “The sage emulates it (the Way of Heaven), lowering himself with humility, putting himself last with withdrawal, minimizing himself with restriction, and lessening himself with detachment” 聖人法之，卑者所以自下也，退者所以自後也，儉者所以自小也，損之所以自少也。 See Wang Liqi, *Wenzi shuyi*, 219. Compare the translation in Cleary, *The Wen-tzu*, 62. See also Andrej Fech, *Das Bambus-Wenzi*, 170.

- 0876 可以治國。不御以道，則民離散。不養
 ... through this, the state can be ordered. If you do not guide (them) with the
 Way, then people will leave and disperse. If you do not nourish...

It stands to reason that the phrase “through this, the state can be ordered” (*ke yi zhi guo* 可以治國) appearing directly before the introduction of the negative thread (unit E) brought the positive strand to conclusion belonging to the last line of its second step.⁸² There have been several proposals as to how the Bamboo-*Wenzi* must have looked at this particular juncture.⁸³ However, I disagree with them because, in my opinion, they do not sufficiently take into account the parallel structure of the text. I argue that the logical structure of the passage under review could have looked as follows:

Table 2: The Reconstruction of the Logical Organization of the Bamboo-Wenzi Fragments with Parallels to the Segment 5–13 of the textus receptus

I	A	御之以道， 養之以德， 無示以賢， 無加以力。	（職） （職）
II	B	PS 御之以道，則民附， 養之以德，則民服， 無示以賢，則民自足， 毋加以力，則民自樸。	NS D 不御以道，則民離散， 不養以德，則民背叛， 視之以賢，則民疾諍， 加之以力，則民苛。
III	C	{ 民附，則 } { 民服，則 } { 民自足，則 } { 民自樸，則 } 可以治國。	E 兆民離散，則國勢衰， 民背叛，則上無威， 民疾諍，則輕為非， 民苛，則上位危。
IV		平王曰：行此四者如何。 文子	

82 Zhang Fengqian has already pointed this out. See Zhang, *Chutu wenxian yu Wenzi Gongan*, 25.

83 Chao Fulin proposed the following arrangement: “If you guide them with the Way, the state can be ordered. If you do not guide (them) with the Way, then people will leave and disperse” 御之以道，可以治國，不御以道，則民離散。 See Chao, “Dingzhou Hanjian *Wenzi Daode pian yice*,” 81. Zhang Fengqian, on the other hand, reconstructs the related lines as: “If these four are carried out, the state can be ordered. If you do not guide (them) with the Way, then people will leave and disperse” 行此四者，可以治國，不御以道，則民離散。 See Zhang, *Chutu wenxian yu Wenzi Gongan*, 42.

As in the above instances, one line of argument contained the recipes for the establishment of order,⁸⁴ whereas the opposite line was associated with chaos. We find here antithetical parallelism, whose use, we have learned earlier, was very common among early Chinese philosophical texts. In fact, it is a kind of parallel reasoning that can be “considered the ‘default mode’ of classical Chinese expository prose”⁸⁵ reflecting “dualistic thinking in Chinese philosophical discourse.”⁸⁶ It is thus small wonder that we find the antithetically formulated parallel sentences across the whole spectrum of the ancient Chinese philosophy, including works of Confucian thinkers⁸⁷ as well as Daoists.⁸⁸ However, it appears to be in some passages of the *Xunzi*, whose style was “highly parallelistic” “even by the standards of pre-Han writing”,⁸⁹ that we find fitting equivalents to the scope and the strict symmetry of the argument in the *Wenzi*. Here is one example from chapter 18:

84 That here, as well as in the other passages of the ancient *Wenzi*, the character *guo* 國 appears to be integrated in the rhyme pattern of the text, makes this text distinct from many other excavated manuscripts from the early Han, such as the *Huangdi sijing*. In these manuscripts the appearance of the character *guo* usually interrupts the rhyme, because it was inserted there later to replace the tabooed character *bang* 邦. For instances, see the *Huangdi sijing* manuscript “Liu fen” 六分, *Mawangdui Hanmu boshu*, 49, columns 22–24. This possibly suggests that the *Wenzi* was created well in the Han dynasty, when *guo* was firmly established as replacement for *bang*.

85 Andrew H. Plaks, “Beyond Parallelism: A Rethinking of Patterns of Coordination and Subordination in Chinese Expository Prose,” in *Literary Forms of Argument in Early China*, 69.

86 Plaks, “Parallelism in Chinese and Western Literatures,” *Chinese Literature: Essays, Articles, Reviews (CLEAR)*, 10.1/2 (Jul., 1988): 48.

87 See for example the excavated manuscripts “Wuxing” 五行 and “Xing zi ming chu” 性自命出. For “Wuxing”, see Dirk Meyer, *Philosophy of Bamboo: Text and Production of Meaning in Early China*, 70–130. For “Xing zi ming chu”, see Ulrike Middendorf 梅道芬, “Qing de zhixu — Guodian ‘Xing zi ming chu’, ‘Yu cong er’ yiji xiangguan xian Qin wenxian zhong de yuyan yu xingqing kao” 「情」的秩序——郭店 性自命出、語叢二 以及相關先秦文獻中的語言與性情考, *Bulletin of the Jao Tsung-I Academy of Sinology*, 1 (2015): 252–57.

88 The following lines from *Laozi* 1 represent one of the most famous examples of antithesis: “Hence always rid yourself of desires in order to observe its secrets; but always allow yourself to have desires in order to observe its manifestations” 故常無欲，以觀其妙；常有欲，以觀其微。

89 Angus Charles Graham, *Disputers of the Tao: Philosophical Argument in Ancient China* (La Salle, Ill.: Open Court, 1989), 254.

	PS		NS
I	上宣明，則下治辨矣； (A) 上端誠，則下愿慤矣； 上公正，則下易直矣。		上周密，則下疑玄矣； (D) 上幽險，則下漸詐矣； 上偏曲，則下比周矣。
II	治辨，則易一， (B) 愿慤，則易使， 易直，則易知。		疑玄，則難一， (E) 漸詐，則難使， 比周，則難知。
III	易一，則彊， (C) 易使，則功， 易知，則明， 是治之所由生也。		難一，則不彊， (F) 難使，則不功， 難知，則不明， 是亂之所由作也。 ⁹⁰
I	If the superior exhibits and elucidates the standard, his subordinates will be orderly and manageable. If the superior is correct and sincere, his subordinates will be attentive and diligent. If the superior is impartial and right, his subordinates will be amenable and honest.	If the superior is secretive and mysterious, his subordinates will be suspicious and confused. If the superior is obscure and inaccessible, his subordinates will be furtive and treacherous. If the superior is biased and one-sided, his subordinates will form parties and cliques.	
II	If they are orderly and manageable, they are easily unified. If they are attentive and diligent, they are easily employed. If they are amenable and honest, they are easily understood.	If they are suspicious and confused, they are difficult to unify. If they are furtive and treacherous, they are difficult to employ. If they form parties and cliques, they are difficult to know.	
III	When the people are easily unified, there is strength; when they are easily employed, there is accomplishment; when they are easily understood, there is an atmosphere of openness and forthrightness — and this is what produces order.	When the people are difficult to unify, there is no strength; when they are difficult to employ, there is no accomplishment; and when they are difficult to know, there is no atmosphere of openness and forthrightness — and this is what creates chaos. ⁹¹	

90 Wang Xianqian, *Xunzi jijie*, 321–22.

91 Knoblock, *Xunzi*, 3: 33.

The resemblance between the two texts includes several aspects. Like the *Wenzi*, the *Xunzi* talks about how the actions of a ruler will affect the subordinates of the state (step I) and how, in turn, the wellbeing of the latter will affect the condition of state (steps II and III). Just like the *Wenzi*, the *Xunzi* contrasts both strands by means of negation (*qiang* 彊 versus *bu qiang* 不彊, *gong* 功 versus *bu gong* 不功, *ming* 明 versus *bu ming* 不明 in step III) and antonyms (*yi* 易 versus *nan* 難). Besides, the clear parallel between the two texts addressed in the previous section appears in the *Xunzi* just before this passage. Given the basic agreement among *Wenzi* scholars that the text must have been created in the second century B.C.,⁹² the above commonalities with the *Xunzi* might imply that the author of the *Wenzi* used the latter not only as a textual source but also as an inspiration for developing his argumentative strategies.

3. Negative Definitions

In some cases, the starting point for the “negative” argumentative strands in the Bamboo-*Wenzi* were negative definitions. Mostly, they have the form of “this is called ‘no-X’” *wei zhi wu* 謂之無 X, as in the below instances:

- 0716 子曰：「君子之驕奢不施，謂之〔無德〕
Master {Wen} said: “For the noble man to be arrogant, wasteful and not sharing, is called the ‘absence of virtue.’”
- 0874 茲謂之無仁，淫
... compassion(?), is called the ‘absence of benevolence.’ To be licentious ...
- 0591 踰節謂之無禮。毋德者則下怨，無
... to overstep one’s bounds, is called the ‘absence of propriety.’ If the Virtue is absent, then the subordinates are resentful; if ... is absent ...
- 0811 立，謂之無道，而國不
[X] established, is called the ‘absence of the Way.’ For a country not to ...

92 See Wang Bo 王博, “Guanyu *Wenzi* de jige wenti” 關於《文子》的幾個問題, *Zhexue yu wenhua* 哲學與文化, 8 (1996): 1911; Ho Che Wah, *Wenzi zhuzuo niandai xinzheng* 《文子》著作年代新證 (Hong Kong: The Chinese University Press, 2004), 66–67; van Els, “The *Wenzi*: Creation and Manipulation of a Chinese Philosophical Text” (Ph.D. Dissertation, Leiden University, 2006), 111–13; Zhang Fengqian, *Chutu wenxian yu Wenzi gongan*, 125, and Fech, *Das Bambus-Wenzi*, 135–42.

Subsuming the notions *jiao* 驕, *she* 奢 and *bu shi* 不施 (strip 0716) under the negative definition of *de* 無德 instead of, for instance, its antonym *yuan* 怨,⁹³ speaks of the author's determination to keep focus on the discussion of Virtue and stress its importance. The same reason stands behind the introduction of the concepts *wu li* 無禮, *wu ren* 無仁 and *wu dao* 無道. As it can be seen from strip 0591, in the bamboo text, the negative definitions were followed by the account on how the absence of the related values would affect the subordinates (*xia* 下). Unlike the definitions, this account is still a part of the *textus receptus*, as can be seen here:

君子無德則下怨，無仁則下爭，無義則下暴，無禮則下亂，四經不立，謂之無道，無道不亡者，未之有也。⁹⁴

If the gentleman has no virtue, then the subordinates will be resentful. If he has no benevolence, then the subordinates will be contentious; if he has no righteousness, then the subordinates will be violent; if he has no propriety, then the subordinates will be chaotic. If the four warps are not established, it is called the absence of the Way. Not to perish when the Way is absent is something that has never occurred.

With the help of the received text, we can attempt to reconstruct the development of the argument at the given juncture of the bamboo manuscript.

- I 君子之驕奢不施，謂之無德，
 { } 茲，謂之無仁，
 淫 { }，謂之無義，
 { } 踰節，謂之無禮。
- II 毋德者，則下怨，
 無 { 仁 }，則下諍。
 無義，則下暴。
 無禮，則下亂。
- III 四 { 經不 } 立，謂之無道，
 { 無道 } 而國不 { 亡者，未之有也。 }⁹⁵

93 An impressive early Han catalogue of the most important philosophical terms of that time including their definitions and antonyms is given in the *Xin shu* 新書. For text, analysis and translation, see Rune Svarverud, *Methods of the Way: Early Chinese Ethical Thought* (Leiden: Brill, 1998).

94 Wang Liqi, *Wenzi shuyi*, 225.

95 Compare the reconstruction of the text in Chao Fulin, "Dingzhou Hanjian *Wenzi Daode pian* yice," 76.

Once again, we have a characteristic text arrangement in blocks, stressing the idea that the political situation in the state (III) depends on the interplay between two key factors: the ruler (I) and the subordinates (II).

The newly reconstructed “negative” strand has a clear counterpart at the beginning of the related section of the transmitted text that begins with the “positive” definitions of the terms “virtue,” “benevolence,” “righteousness” and “propriety.” These definitions — not discussed here for the brevity reasons — constitute the first step of the argument that is then followed by the lines:

- | | | |
|-----|---|-----|
| II | 故 | |
| | 修其德，則下從令， | （耕） |
| | 修其仁，則下不爭， | （耕） |
| | 修其義，則下平正， | （耕） |
| | 修其禮，則下尊敬， | （耕） |
| III | 四者既修，國家安寧。 ⁹⁶ | （耕） |
| II | Therefore: | |
| | If you cultivate your Virtue, then the subordinates will follow orders. | |
| | If you cultivate your benevolence, then the subordinates will not fight. | |
| | If you cultivate your righteousness, then the subordinates will be uniform and upright. | |
| | If you cultivate your propriety, then the subordinates will be respectful and reverent. | |
| III | When these four are cultivated, the state is in tranquility and peace. | |

It is not difficult to recognize that the overall development of the argument, running from the definitions of the four virtues (I) to the effect of their cultivation on the subordinates (II) and concluded by a statement regarding the wellbeing of the state (III), parallels the “negative” strand discovered in the bamboo manuscript. And even though most of “positive” lines have no convincing equivalents in the Dingzhou fragments, the assumption that also here the Bamboo-*Wenzi* deployed two symmetrical antithetical lines of argumentation seems not too far-fetched.

⁹⁶ Wang Liqi, *Wenzi shuyi*, 225.

Conclusion

To conclude, we see that, when creating his text, the author of the *Wenzi* was mainly confronted with the task of selecting, adjusting and putting together different “building blocks” to generate the conceptual unity of a text that would highlight the prominence of the notions of the Way and the Virtue. To enhance its persuasiveness, a great portion of the work was formulated in two contrasting symmetrical lines of argumentation, for such argument had the effect of stressing that there was no real alternative to complying with the main precepts of the text, with each deviation therefrom with necessity leading to chaos and loss of power. In most of the cases presented the argument included steps associated with the ruler of the state and its common population. From this it can be understood that the author fully recognized the importance of the people’s contentment for the security of the state and included the social factor in his notion of the Way.

How do we explain the fact that the received text communicates what seems to be the dominant argumentative feature of the original text in such a piecemeal and distorted fashion? Was its editor responsible for it or was the *Wenzi* already incomplete when it came into his hands? The above-mentioned fact that two thirds of the Bamboo-*Wenzi* have no parallel in the received text, seems to speak for the second possibility because the scenario that the editor of the *textus receptus* deliberately dismissed such a large part of the text seems unlikely.⁹⁷ However, a comparison of the transmitted *Wenzi* with its main source, the *Huainanzi*,⁹⁸ shows that, very often, the content of the latter is reproduced in the former in an unintelligible way by removing or distorting crucial argumentative elements.⁹⁹ Thus, it is entirely possible that the version of the *Wenzi* that functioned as the basis for the *textus receptus* was in a more complete and better-organized state before getting restructured and merged with other texts in the latter. Perhaps, Liu Zongyuan’s 柳宗元 (773–819) critique of the creator of the *Heguanzi* 鶡冠子 applies also in the case of the transmitted *Wenzi*: “I think an amateur forged this treatise” 吾意好事者偽為

97 van Els, “The *Wenzi*,” 169–70.

98 For a detailed comparison between the transmitted *Wenzi* and *Huainanzi*, see Ding Yuanzhi, *Huainanzi yu Wenzi kaobian* 《淮南子》與《文子》考辨 (Taipei: Wanjuanlou, 1999).

99 Barbara Kandel, *Wen Tzu – Ein Beitrag zur Problematik und Verständnis eines taoistischen Textes* (Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang, 1973), 93ff.

其書。¹⁰⁰ It seems, therefore, that at least two factors could have contributed to the “distorted” state of the transmitted version: substantial loss of the text material in the process of its transmission and the editorial “mishandling” of what was left of it.

The parallel, symmetric and orderly development of the argument involving large parts of text distinguishes the *Wenzi* from the work of the supposed teacher of Master Wen, Laozi. The latter’s idiosyncratic lack of structure sometimes lead even such renowned scholars as D. C. Lau to conclude that the *Laozi* “is no more than a collection of passages with only a common tendency in thought.”¹⁰¹ And even though recent studies of its argumentative features have persuasively shown that this view was outdated,¹⁰² I would still agree with Hans-Georg Moeller that “if the chapters [of the *Laozi*] are read on their own, or the book is read linearly, the text remains hermetically closed.” In order to understand the text, one should instead scrutinize the text’s images and follow the internal references between them.¹⁰³

Thus, while on the micro level of the *Wenzi* there is plenty of evidence for using some *Laozi* specific techniques, such as the *Laozi*-style tetrasyllabic verse,¹⁰⁴ on the macro level its handling of argument seem to bear witness to the influence of another prominent pre-Han text: the *Xunzi*. The latter viewed the orderly, “patterned” (*wen* 文) arrangement of the text not just as the “unpurposive adornment,” but as the embodiment of and the proper vehicle for the cultural legacy of the early Zhou dynasty that can be characterized with a single word: *wen*.¹⁰⁵ I have argued elsewhere that *wen* was also among

100 Carine Defoort, “Pheasant Cap Master,” in *Dao Companion to Daoist Philosophy*, ed. Liu xiaogan (Dordrecht: Springer, 2015), 282.

101 Lau, *Tao Te Ching*, 134.

102 William H. Baxter, “Situating the Language of the *Lao-tzu*: The Probable Date of the *Tao-Te-Ching*,” in *Lao-tzu and the Tao-te-ching*, eds. Livia Kohn and Michael Lafargue (Albany: State University of New York, 1998), 231–54; Rudolf G. Wagner, *The Craft of a Chinese Commentator* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2000), 62–96; Joachim Gentz, “Zwischen den Argumenten lesen. Doppelt gerichtete Parallelismen zwischen Argumenten als zentrale Thesen in frühen Chinesischen Texten,” *Bochumer Jahrbuch für Ostasienforschung* 29 (2005): 37–40.

103 Moeller, *The Philosophy of the Daodejing*, 6–10.

104 David Schaberg, “On the Range and Performance of *Laozi*-Style Tetrasyllables,” in *Literary Forms of Argument in Early China*, 99.

105 Schaberg, *A Patterned Past: Form and Thought in Early Chinese Historiography* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2001), 50.

the central notions of the Bamboo-*Wenzi* and that even the name of the main character, Master Wen, can be seen as reflecting its significance.¹⁰⁶ And thus I want to conclude this article by proposing that while the *Wenzi*'s particular view of *wen* was different from the *Xunzi* there is still some evidence that, just as in the latter, its “patterned” way of argument represented an attempt to bring the verbal representation of the teaching, its form, into line with its content.

106 Feich, *Das Bambus-Wenzi*, 247–49.

「道」與「文」：論《文子》的論證特點

費安德

南方科技大學

本研究旨在探討如何從現存殘篇中的論證特點來推測原始文本的整體內容和結構。道家典籍《文子》十分適合用來做這樣的研究，《文子》現有的兩個版本，即今本《文子》和1973年定州出土的西漢簡本《文子》，雖然存在一定差異，但都殘缺不全，且為人篡改過。本文首先分析了《文子》與其他早期中國文獻間的相似之處。研究發現《文子》在很大程度上受到《老子》和《荀子》的影響，這也為研究文本的創作時代提供了間接證據；此外，文本間的互文性也反映出特定論證特點的重要性，其中「反義平行」是最為突出的。本文的重點是要通過文本的修辭方式來重建文本序列。儘管包括《老子》在內的中國早期文獻都廣泛使用「反義平行」，但仍然能找到一些證據表明《荀子》才是《文子》的靈感來源，而「反義平行」恰恰構成了《荀子》中「文」的話語模式，並以此來闡釋周代所崇尚的文化價值——「文」。《文子》中「文」這一概念極為重要，儘管這一點經常被人忽視，它意味著道家的核心概念「道」得以完全實現。本文認為，正如《荀子》一樣，《文子》也試圖建立一種哲學學說內涵與表現形式上關聯。

關鍵詞：《文子》 互文性 反義平行 《荀子》 《老子》