

The Growth of Compounds in the Core Chapters of the *Mozzi**

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1. Introduction

The form in which the ethical “core chapters” of the *Mozzi* (MZ 8–37) are written has posed serious and challenging questions to scholars throughout the world. These chapters expound the 10 basic Mohist doctrines, each of which occurs in three different versions (i.e. in three chapters).¹ In other words, ten “triplets” or “triads” all contain a “shangpian” 上篇, “zhongpian” 中篇 and “xiapian” 下篇, at first sight with more or less the same contents.² But when one reads these chapters more closely, the differences between the three versions soon appear. Some scholars have paid more attention to this somewhat strange phenomenon, and their studies have focused on the differences instead of on the similarities. The main question has mostly been *why* the ten doctrines in fact each consisted of three chapters.

This paper will not try to find a new answer to the “why”-question of the three versions. Instead, it will test the assumptions of three important *Mozzi*-scholars on the basis of a new and quite experimental method, namely by focusing on the distribution of *compounds* in the core chapters of the *Mozzi*. Although this method has not often been applied to other texts, it will prove useful, and enable us to evaluate the existing theories on the three-fold structure of the core chapters.

1.1 State of the field

For a better understanding of what follows, an overview of all the core chapters will be given in the sequence in which they are now found in the *Mozzi*. The numbers between brackets indicate the number of characters within each chapter.³

* A paper on this topic was also presented at a Mozi-conference in Taiwan, Taibei: “Moxue xiandai hua guoji xueshu yantaohui” 墨學現代化國際學術研討會 [International Conference on Mo Tzu: Mohist Thought in Contemporary Context], August 22–24, 2005.

1 Regrettably, some chapters have been lost (see below). It is supposed that the incomplete triplets also once consisted of three chapters, since this is listed as such in the table of contents, which can be traced back to the Han dynasty.

2 Most scholars do not consider MZ 38 and 39, the chapters of the so-called “eleventh doctrine”, a part of the core chapters. This is because this doctrine (the *fei ru* 非儒 doctrine) originally seems to have existed in only two versions instead of three, of which only MZ 39 is still extant, and the style in which MZ 39 is written differs markedly from that of the other core chapters. This chapter is usually regarded as later than the other core chapters. In this paper, it will not be taken into account, although it shares certain features with one of the three groups within the core chapters (the H-group), as I tried to show at a WSWG Conference in Leiden, 2003.

3 Characters were counted using the version found in the ICS Concordance Series. See *Mozzi zhuixi suoyin* 墨子逐字索引 (A Concordance to the *Mozzi*), ed. D.C. Lau, The ICS Ancient Chinese Texts Concordance Series Philosophical Works No. 41 (Hong Kong: Commercial Press, 2001). This index uses the

Table 1: The three versions of the 10 doctrines and their number of characters

	上篇	中篇	下篇
尚賢 <i>shang xian</i>	8 (819)	9 (2337)	10 (1495)
尚同 <i>shang tong</i>	11 (797)	12 (2398)	13 (1872)
兼愛 <i>jian'ai</i>	14 (563)	15 (1307)	16 (2720)
非攻 <i>fei gong</i>	17 (426)	18 (1276)	19 (2012)
節用 <i>jieryong</i>	20 (596)	21 (572)	-
節葬 <i>jiEZang</i>	-	-	25 (2811)
天志 <i>tianzhi</i>	26 (1362)	27 (2302)	28 (2284)
明鬼 <i>ming gui</i>	-	-	31 (3406)
非樂 <i>fei yue</i>	32 (1540)	-	-
非命 <i>fei ming</i>	35 (1473)	36 (992)	37 (1436)

The most recent studies in the West on the Mohist ethical “core chapters” or “triplets” (MZ 8–37) are the ones conducted by A.C. Graham and Bruce and Taeko Brooks.⁴ On the basis of a study of the wording, grammar and contents of the Mohist core chapters, Graham succeeded in dividing these chapters into three different groups: the Y, H, and J-group.⁵ Each group is named after a special grammatical feature: the Y-chapters cite Mozi (after the opening sentence) with the formula *zi Mozi yan yue* 子墨子言曰 instead of *zi Mozi yue* 子墨子曰; the H-chapters replace the post-verbal particle *yu* 於 by *hu* 乎 when possible; and the J-chapters use the particle *ran* 然 (or *jan* in Wade-Giles) after the citing of an ancient book. According to Graham, these three groups of texts are the result of three competing sects, in which Mohism is said to have divided according to *Hanfeizi* 50, “Xian xue pian” 顯學篇, and *Zhuangzi* 33, “Tianxia pian” 天下篇.⁶ He considers that the Y-group defends the Mohist doctrine in its “purest”, most radical form; the H-group is somewhat more accommodated to political realities; and the J-group is the one farthest removed from the original doctrine. For instance, MZ 15Y (of the “Fei gong” 非攻 triplet) rejects all forms of aggression, while MZ 16H accepts not only defensive wars but even justified wars of aggression. Therefore, Graham labels the groups as “Purist”, “Compromising” and “Reactionary” respectively.⁷ Although these titles seem to reflect some kind of evolution, Graham is convinced that the three Mohist sects existed roughly at the same time, and he links each of them to a specific region.

Sibu congkan as its basis. The *Sibu congkan* version is nearly identical with the text found in the *Daozang*, presumably the most reliable copy of the *Mozzi* we now have. Characters between round brackets have been counted, but emendations between square brackets have not. Titles have not been counted.

- 4 It is beyond the scope of this paper to explain these extensive studies in every detail. For further reading, see Angus C. Graham, *Divisions in Early Mohism Reflected in the Core Chapters of Mo-tzu* (Singapore: Institute of East Asian Philosophies, 1985) and the internet archive of WSWG (Warring States Working Group) at www.umass.edu/wsp for the research done by Bruce and Taeko Brooks.
- 5 His grammatical study was largely based on the findings of Stephen W. Durrant. See his *An Examination of Textual and Grammatical Problems in Mo Tzu* (PhD diss., University of Washington, 1975). The grammatical characteristics of each group will be listed below.
- 6 Graham, *Divisions in Early Mohism*, 18–19.
- 7 Angus C. Graham, *Disputers of the Tao: Philosophical Argument in Ancient China* (Chicago and La Salle, IL: Open Court, 1989), 36.

His division of the core chapters can be graphically represented as follows:

Table 2: The division of the core chapters according to Graham

	Digests and Fragments	Y “Purist”	H “Compromising”	J “Reactionary”
尚賢		8	9	10
尚同		11	12	13
兼愛	14	15	16	-
非攻	17	18	19	-
節用	20	21	-	-
節葬		-	25	-
天志		26	27	28
明鬼		-	31	-
非樂		-	32	-
非命		9.3/58/13–24 + 9.4/60/21–30 +9.3/59/21–60/13	37 + 9.3/59/4–20	9.4/60/17–21 +9.3/58/24–59/2 +9.4/61/1–25

As can be inferred from the above table, Graham regarded MZ 14, 17 and 20 as not being part of the core chapters. He thought that MZ 14 and 20 were digests of a later date (like chapters MZ 1–7), and that MZ 17 was mistakenly cut from the end of MZ 26, where it in fact belonged. Graham also considered the “Fei ming” 非命 triad as mixed up, and tried to reconstruct it, as can be seen in the last row of the table⁸.

Bruce and Taeko Brooks, who made a similar study of the different layers within the Mohist core chapters, largely agree with Graham’s division. However, they do not support the conclusion derived from this division: they do not think that the triads bear witness to three competing Mohist sects, but rather that they are the result of successive revision and progressive accommodation to political realities within one and the same school. “The Mician ethical chapters thus form a single evolutionary sequence, and second and third members of sets represent *successive revision and updating*.”⁹ The layers distinguished by Bruce and Taeko Brooks can be represented by the following chart (chapters are ranked according to their supposed date of composition):¹⁰

8 The references in this paper to specific parts of the *Mozzi* will all come from the DC Lau-Index. “9.3/58/13–24” for instance refers to *juan 9 pian 3* (MZ 35), page 58, lines 13 to 24 of the Index. 9.3 is MZ 35, 9.4 is MZ 36 and 9.5 is MZ 37. As can be seen, Graham used parts of MZ 35 and 36 to reconstruct the Y-chapter of the “Fei ming” triad, he added a piece of MZ 35 to MZ 37 to form the H-chapter, and the J-chapter is again a mixture of the original MZ 35 and 36.

9 Bruce Brooks, “Mician Ethical Chapters,” Sequence 2539 (04/11/2000). The Brookses’ documents could be found on the internet archive of the Warring States Working Group in the past at www.umass.edu/wsp, but now they are no longer available. They will be published in the future by Bruce and Taeko Brooks in a WSW Journal (pers. comm.).

10 Taeko Brooks, “Evolution of the Mician Triplets” (06/03/1996).

Table 3: The division of the core chapters according to Bruce and Taeko Brooks:

	尚賢	尚同	兼愛	非攻	節用	節葬	天志	明鬼	非樂	非命
1st layer - 390 B.C.				17Y						
2nd layer			14Y							
3rd layer					20Y					
4th layer		11Y			21Y					
5th layer	08Y		15Y	18Y			26Y			
6th layer									32H	
7th layer	09H	12H		19H	-	25H				
8th layer			16H				27H	31H		37H
9th layer	10J						28J			
10th layer - 280 B.C.		13J								

A comparison between Graham's chart and the Brooks' chart reveals the following differences (apart from their disagreement on the explanation of the three groups):

- Whereas Graham thought that MZ 14, 17 and 20 were later chapters and not a part of the core chapters, the Brooks place them within the core chapters, and more specifically as the ones supposedly written first. This results in three triplets with two Y-chapters, and no J-chapter: “Jian'ai” 兼愛, “Fei gong” and “Jieyong” 節用.
- The modifications Graham made to the mixed up “Fei ming” triad are not taken over by the Brooks. They only accept MZ 37 as being completely H, but they think that MZ 35 and 36 are too mixed up to be able to reconstruct them with confidence.
- The evolution from Y to H has been convincingly argued for by the Brooks. However, they do not pay much attention to the relation between H and J; they somehow seem to take it for granted that the J-chapters were written last.

Now I will briefly list the linguistic characteristics of each group according to Graham and the Brooks:

- Y: (1) after the opening sentence, master Mozi is cited a second time, with the formula *zǐ Mozi yan yue* 子墨子言曰, sometimes preceded by *shi gu* 是故, instead of with the formula *zǐ Mozi yue* 子墨子曰; (2) the special linguistic features found in the other chapters such as *wei wu* 惟毋 and *ruo gou* 若苟, which give them the impression of being written in a certain dialect, are almost entirely missing; (3) these chapters often use *fu* 弗 instead of *bu* 不之.
- H: (1) some H-chapters have both the particles *yu* 於 and *hu* 乎, but *yu* is replaced by *hu* when possible (in the other chapters *yu* is either dominant, or both *yu* and *hu* rarely occur); (2) certain particles/compounds are only used in the H-chapters, namely *ji* 即, *dang ruo* 當若, *wanmin* 萬民, *guanfu* 官府, and *tianguai* 天鬼; (3) these chapters always use *xing tianxia zhi li* 興天下之利 (“raise up benefit to the world”) in combination with *chu tianxia zhi hai* 除天下之害 (“get rid of harm from the world”), as a kind of formula; (4) the rare use of *wu* 勿 instead of *wu zhi* 毋之 is limited to these chapters.
- J: the J-chapters have three unique features in the formula used before citing an ancient book: (1) before the book title one finds *yu xianwang zhi shu* 於先王之書 (“among the books of the former kings”), with the use of *yu* being unique; (2) after the book title one finds *ran yue* 然曰 or *ran* 然; (3) in 4 out of the 6 cases the book title consists of two words and has a specific form: X X *zhi yan/shu* (X X 之言/書).

Both Graham and the Brookses knew an article written as early as 1962 by a Japanese Mozi-scholar, Watanabe Takashi,¹¹ but they have not developed his insights¹². Watanabe does not try to argue for either of the two theories (the three sects-theory or the evolutionary theory), but merely describes the contents of the core chapters, on the basis of which he tries to find out which chapters are possibly based on which. His arguments are convincing but complicated, and assume that one takes *all* the core chapters into account, and not only one triplet. His research also results in an *evolutionary* picture, but one which deviates considerably from the one developed by the Brookses. In the chart below, which is not included in Watanabe's article, I give an overview of his results concerning the five triplets that are still complete (since these are also the triplets this paper will concentrate on). The triplets that still contain three versions are “Shang xian” 尚賢 (MZ 8–10), “Shang tong” 尚同 (MZ 11–13), “Jian'ai” (MZ 14–16), “Fei gong” (MZ 17–19), and “Tianzhi” 天志 (MZ 26–28) (see table 1 above). Watanabe does not give exact dates for the chapters but suggests that the last chapter in this table (“Shang xian, zhong”) was written by the end of the Warring States period or the beginning of the Qin.

Table 4: The evolution of the five complete triplets according to Watanabe Takashi

		兼愛上 (14Y)	非攻上 (17Y)	
尚賢上 (8Y)				
		兼愛中 (15Y)	非攻中 (18Y)	
		兼愛下 (16H)	非攻下 (19H)	
	尚同上 (11Y)			
	尚同下 (13J)			天志上 (26Y)
	尚同中 (12H)			天志下 (28J)
尚賢下 (10J)				
				天志中 (27H)
尚賢中 (9H)				

Some observations on this view have to be made:

- Watanabe also incorporates MZ 14 and 17 into the core chapters, and like the Brookses, gives them the first place in the chart, reflecting an early date (MZ 20 is not mentioned here because it does not belong to a complete triplet)
- This results in two sorts of triplets: 1. triplets with a Y, H and J-chapter (“Shang xian”, “Shang tong” and “Tianzhi”), and 2. triplets with 2 Y-chapters and an H-chapter (“Jian'ai” and “Fei gong”). In this last group, Watanabe assigns the same sequence to the chapters as the Brookses; both first rank MZ 14Y and 17Y, then MZ 15Y and 18Y, and then MZ 16H and 19H (in other words, they agree with the “shang”, “zhong”, “xia”-division). As for the first group of triplets, the triplets which contain a J-chapter, their views differ: the Brookses

11 Watanabe Takashi 渡邊卓, “Bokushi shohen no chosaku nendai 墨子諸篇の著作年代 (Chronology of the 23 Volumes of *Mo Tzu*),” *The Toyo Gakubo* 45.3 (1962), 1–38 (上) and 45.4 (1963), 20–38 (下).

12 Graham mentions Watanabe briefly, and the Brookses state that they know the contents of his article, but do not agree with the conclusions (pers. comm.). The reason why this paper first explains Graham's theory, then the Brookses' and only later on the earliest one, i.e. Watanabe's theory, is that Graham's theory is the most well-known, followed by the evolutionary theory of the Brookses, again followed by Watanabe's less well-known view.

- give a sequence of Y-H-J (上, 中, 下), whereas Watanabe thinks the H-chapters were always written last (a Y-J-H –sequence, or 上, 下, 中).¹³
- Comparing the Brookses’ chart with Watanabe’s view, one is immediately struck by an important difference: in Watanabe’s view the three groups of chapters overlap to say the least. According to the Brookses, the second group of chapters (in their view: H) were only written when the last chapter of the first group (Y) was finished, and the last group in turn (according to them: J) followed neatly on the last chapter of the H-group. In Watanabe’s view, however, all groups of chapters were intertwined with each other; for instance, in his view the last chapter of the *jian’ai* doctrine (16H) was already finished when the first one of the *shang tong* doctrine (11Y) had not yet been started. Needless to say, if this hypothesis holds true, this complicates the picture.

1.2 Summary and central questions of the paper

The three views presented above can be schematically summarized as follows:

1. Graham: *three sects-theory* (no attention to temporal difference¹⁴)
Y-H-J – MZ 14 and 17 late¹⁵
2. Brookses: *evolutionary theory* (temporal difference)
Y-H-J – MZ 14 and 17 early – three groups neatly distinguished
3. Watanabe: *evolutionary* (temporal difference)
Y-J-H – MZ 14 and 17 early – three groups overlap

In other words, taking these three views into account in order to investigate the core chapters of the *Mozzi* further involves the following questions:

1. Is there a temporal difference between the three groups of chapters? (Graham ↔ Brookses, Watanabe)

13 It has to be remarked that Watanabe was unaware of the later “Y”, “H” and “J” labelling of the chapters. His paper formulates his findings in terms of 上, 中 and 下. For the sake of uniformity and clarity however, this paper will consistently adopt the “Y”, “H” and “J” labels, also when talking about Watanabe’s view. This is important, because it is not the case that “Y” neatly corresponds to “shang”, “H” to “zhong” and “J” to “xia”; in the “Jian’ai” and “Fei gong” triplets for instance, “H” corresponds to “xia” instead of to “zhong”. In the case of “Jiezang”, “Ming gui” and “Fei yue”, the H-chapter corresponds to “xia”, again “xia” and “shang” respectively. For the correspondence between Y, H and J and 上, 中 and 下 of the five triplets this paper will concentrate on, see table 4 above.

14 In fact, Graham is not very clear about his opinion on a possible temporal difference between the three layers. On the one hand, his three sects-theory is based on the accounts given by *Zhuangzi* 33 and *Hanfeizi* 50, which describe the three Mohist sects as fighting for dominance *at the same time*. Graham seems to agree with this view throughout his work (in *Disputers of the Tao*, 51, 53, for instance, he states that the Mohist sects “fought” and “disputed” with each other). On the other hand, in *Divisions in Early Mohism*, 28, he says that his paper “has ignored all questions of dating”, and he seems to allow for some variance in dating. I take it that, if the three versions are to be seen as the result of three sects competing simultaneously, the temporal difference between them should be relatively small, and in any case much less important than assumed by the Brookses or Watanabe. Therefore, throughout this paper, Graham’s view is formulated as “no (attention to) temporal difference”.

15 And MZ 20, but as said above, this paper will concentrate on the five triplets that are still complete, so this chapter will not be dealt with any longer. The reason for concentrating on these five triplets will be explained below.

2. Are MZ 14 and 17 the earliest of the core chapters, or are they too late to be a part of them? (Graham ↔ Brookses, Watanabe)
3. If a temporal difference between the three groups is found, is the correct chronological sequence Y-H-J (上中下) or Y-J-H (上下中)? In other words, which group is likely to be the most recent one, the J-group or the H-group? (Brookses ↔ Watanabe)¹⁶
4. If a temporal difference is found, are the three groups of chapters clearly distinguished or do they overlap? (Brookses ↔ Watanabe)

These four questions are the central questions of this paper. Although it may remain impossible to give a final answer to these questions, it should be possible to find at least some *indication* as to which scholar is to be given most credit.

1.3 Structure of the paper

In what follows, the method applied in this paper is explained in detail (part two). The research of other scholars and their conclusions will play an important role in this. In the second part I will also briefly explain what I mean by the term “compound”. In part three, the method discussed will be applied to the core chapters: the total number of compounds in the different chapters will be examined. A short explanation of a more tentative part of my research (on the “exclusive compounds”) will also be included. Finally in part four, the most important conclusions will be summarized, and a last remark on the three-fold structure of the Mohist core chapters will close this paper.

2. Method

2.1 Previously used methods and their evaluation

The methods used by the three scholars mentioned above are quite diverse. Graham paid attention to grammatical features and differences in wording between the different chapters in order to divide them into three groups, and then looked for differences in content, which enabled him to ascribe the labels “purist”, “compromising” and “reactionary” to the groups in question. The Brookses made a similar study of the grammar and wording, but also investigated content elements that may reflect an intellectual, technological and social progress within the three versions. Finally, Watanabe did not concentrate on wording or grammar, but focused on the sophistication of ideas and logic, on the basis of which he tried to distinguish between early chapters and more sophisticated later ones.

These methods all have their value, and this paper does not mean to cast doubt on their outcome. However, it may still be useful to experiment with other, less commonly used methods as well. The kind of method I will propose below does not claim to be the one and only decisive test either. Without doubt, combining as many methods as possible is more likely to provide reliable dating of a text.

16 For the triplets that do not contain a J-chapter – “Jian’*ai*” and “Fei gong” – this is also an important matter. Because, if the J-group turns out to be later than H, this means that their last chapter (J) was never written – as far as we know at least. But if H turns out to be the latest group, then we possibly have a picture of Y1–Y2–H instead of Y–J–H, and in that case the question arises whether it is still useful to distinguish between Y2 and J. This question will be re-addressed at the end of the paper.

2.2 A new approach: compounds may reflect evolution

The method applied in this paper, as an experiment on the Mohist ethical core chapters, puts its focus on *compounding*. It has long been recognized by linguists that the Chinese language was originally a primarily monosyllabic language, with one syllable often standing for one word or one concept. As time went by, however, there was an increasing trend towards disyllabicity, and more and more two-syllable words became required to express one single word or concept.¹⁷

This phenomenon was recognized by Wang Li in 1956. In his *Hanyu yinyun xue* he writes:

(...)，可見聲調是與“單音語”(monosyllabic language)有密切關係的。漢語近代雙音綴以上的詞漸漸增加，但我們越遠溯至古代，則雙音綴的詞必越少，因此，同音異義的字必甚多。¹⁸

(...)，so it is clear that tones are closely related to monosyllabic languages. In the Chinese of modern times, words composed of two syllables or more gradually increase, but the farther we trace this back to old times, the fewer words there are that are composed of two syllables, and therefore, the more characters there are with the same sound but different meanings.”

Other scholars have not only recognized the phenomenon, but have also tried to explain it. According to Liang Xiaohong, the trend towards disyllabicity began before the Han dynasty, but was greatly influenced by the translation of Buddhist texts from the Han, Wei and Six Dynasties onwards.¹⁹ The reason why the translation of the Buddhist Canon stimulated the formation of words consisting of two characters (in written texts) is two-fold. Firstly, the Buddhist texts were written in popular language, and when translated into Chinese, they were naturally closer to the spoken language than to written Classical Chinese. According to Liang, this spoken language contained words that often consisted of two syllables or more, and when that type of words was incorporated into written texts, they greatly stimulated an already ongoing evolution of the Chinese written language towards disyllabicity. Secondly, when Buddhist terms or names had to be translated into Chinese, words consisting of more than one character were naturally chosen, because they reflected the original sound (which was not possible with one character), or, when trying to reflect the original meaning, often more than one character was required to give a more or less adequate translation of difficult philosophical terms.

Liu Chenghui reacts against the thesis that the Buddhist texts would have promoted compounds in Classical Chinese.²⁰ His paper describes how compounds came into being in Clas-

17 It is important to remark that this trend can be recognized only in written texts, since we have almost no knowledge of the spoken Chinese of old times. The relation between spoken and written Classical Chinese remains unclear. Nevertheless, most scholars seem to assume that the trend towards two-character words in the written language reflected a trend towards disyllabicity in spoken Chinese.

By “disyllabicity” I mean “the tendency to use two characters instead of one”. “Disyllabic words” are not necessarily real “compounds” (which is a category *within* the “disyllabic words”), as will be seen later in this paper (paragraph 2.4).

18 Wang Li 王力, *Hanyu yinyun xue* 漢語音韻學 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1982, 1st ed.: 1956), 452.

19 Liang Xiaohong 梁曉虹, “Han Wei Liuchao yi jing dui Hanyu cihui shuangyinhu de yingxiang” 漢魏六朝譯經對漢語詞匯雙音化的影響, *Nanjing shida xuebao* 2 (1991), 73–78.

20 Liu Chenghui 劉承慧, “Gu Hanyu shici de fuhua” 古漢語實詞的複合化, *Gu jin tongse: Hanyu de lishi yu fazhan – Disan jie guoji Hanxue lishi lunwenji (juyan zu)* 古今通塞: 漢語的歷史與發展 – 第三屆國際漢學會議論文集 (語言組), edited by He Da’an 何大安 (Taipei: Zhongyang yanjiu yuan, 2003), 107–139.

sical Chinese, and how the principles of compounding changed over time. According to Liu, the evolution towards disyllabicity already began in the Western Zhou period:

西周前後，同義、近義並列複合詞出現，僵化複合詞組的數量也大有增長，複合化於是展開。²¹

Around the Western Zhou, compounds made up of two characters with the same or with a similar meaning appeared, and the number of compounds that became rigidly established also greatly increased, and compounding spread out from here.

In his article, Liu describes how in early days, compounds were either disyllabic phrases of relatively high frequency or disyllabic words of two phonetically related synonyms paralleled together. As compounds accumulated in the lexicon, however, more and more monosyllabic elements, which he calls “fixed stems of compounding”, became salient for the formation of new compounds. One of those fixed stems, for instance, is *ying* 英; it became the basis for new compounds such as *yingxiong* 英雄, *yingqi* 英奇, *yingte* 英特, and so forth. By the seventh century A.D., according to Liu Chenghui, compounding via fixed stems had become the major mechanism of encoding new words, while the old system of compounding mainly consisted in combining two characters with more or less the same meaning.

In a comprehensive study, Cheng Xiangqing also investigates the development and principles of compounding.²² He first investigates the development of the number of compounds used from the *Shangshu* and *Shijing* through the *Lunyu* and *Hanfeizi*, and concludes that the trend towards disyllabicity gradually increased from the pre-Qin period onwards (even from the oldest texts onwards), and became especially pronounced after the Warring States period. According to Cheng, the reason for this evolution lies in an internal conflict in the language of that period: as time went by, the task of social expression became incompatible with the means that the language could offer for it. In a primitive society, there was no pressing need to create new words, and if required, creating them by means of new monosyllabic sounds sufficed. However, as society became more complex and ever more new words were needed (through an evolution from the bronze age to the iron age, and from a “slave society” to a “feudal society”), this way of creating new words was no longer sufficient. This is because the number of single syllables is limited, and the increase in words with the same pronunciation (*tongyinci* 同音詞) led to confusion. Hence, compounding became the obvious solution for the creation of new words, according to Cheng.²³ From a more active point of view, compounds were also *chosen* because, in Cheng’s view, they enabled the lively expression of ideas, and in short contributed to the aesthetics of the Chinese language.²⁴

The evolution of Chinese society thus resulted in an increase in disyllabic words, which were either real “compounds” (*shuangyinci* 雙音詞) or “disyllabic phrases” (*shuangyin cizu* 雙音詞組). Cheng describes a whole system of distinguishing between these two, which will be of importance for my definition of “a compound” later in this paper. In the rest of his work, he investigates the evolution in the structure of the so-called “real” compounds.

21 Ibid., 107–108.

22 Cheng Xiangqing 程湘清, “Xianqin shuangyinci yanjiu” 先秦双音词研究, *Xianqin Hanyu yanjiu* 先秦汉语研究, edited by Cheng Xiangqing 程湘清 (Shandong: Shandong jiaoyu, 1992), 44–112.

23 Ibid., 58.

24 Ibid., 59–60.

Another study was conducted by Feng Shengli,²⁵ who addressed three matters concerning the evolution of compounding: first of all, the features of compound words, which according to him came into being in the pre-Qin period and increased dramatically during the Han; secondly, the criteria to identify these compounds (and distinguish them from mere “disyllabic phrases”); and thirdly and most importantly, the reason for their development. Feng compared the number of compounds in the *Mencius* (according to him: 372–289 BC) to the compounds in Zhao Qi’s commentary on the *Mencius* (200 AD), finding a major increase in them, and in disyllabic phrases in general. Feng suggests this evolution cannot be explained by the theory that compounding would have been necessary to create new words (the need for new words does not explain the trend towards disyllabicity; words could equally well have been created with three characters or more, and this was not the case), nor can it be explained by purely aesthetic factors.²⁶ Why then was the two-syllable unit preferred from the Han dynasty onwards? Drawing heavily on linguistics, Feng’s answer is very technical, but it can be summarized as follows. The increase in disyllabicity during the Han was not due to syntax nor to semantics, but to *prosody*. The increase in disyllabicity was caused by a new prosodic structure, which occurred as a result of a new, simplified syllable structure in Old Chinese. Namely, phonological changes from Old (ca. 1000 BC) to Middle Chinese (ca. 800 AD) resulted in a simplification of syllable structure from (C)CVC(C)(C) (Old Chinese) to CV (Middle Chinese), with C being a consonant and V being a vowel. In metrical theory, syllables with a CVCC structure are heavier than syllables with a CVC structure, which in turn are heavier than CV syllables. In other words, syllable weight decreased incessantly during the course of Chinese history due to phonological changes. An important consequence of this evolution was the fact that one syllable was no longer “heavy” enough to form a minimal independent prosodic unit (a foot). As a result, the new system required that the minimal prosodic unit (the foot) was formed not by one, but by two syllables. In Old Chinese, a one-syllable foot was permitted because of its heavy structure, but since the syllable subsequently evolved from strong to weak, it lost the possibility to independently form a foot. In this case, two-syllable combinations will naturally come to play a major role in the foot formation of a language. Once lexicalized, these two-syllable combinations become compounds.

No matter what the reason was for the trend towards disyllabicity and compounding in the Chinese language, all linguists seem to agree that the evolution did take place.²⁷ According to the scholars mentioned above, this trend already began prior to the Qin, and became especially pronounced during and after the Han. If this assertion is correct, then a focus on compounds could possibly be a fruitful method of investigating even pre-Qin texts. As Cheng Xiangqing showed, early pre-Qin texts, such as parts of the *Shangshu* or *Shijing*, contain very few compounds, while early parts of the *Lunyu* already reflect an increase in them, with a further undeniable increase in such texts as the *Mencius* and the still later *Hanfeizi*.

25 Feng Shengli, “Prosodic structure and compound words in Classical Chinese,” in *New Approaches to Chinese Word Formation: Morphology, Phonology and the Lexicon in Modern and Ancient Chinese*, ed. Jerome L. Packard, Trends in Linguistics, Studies and Monographs, 105 (Berlin and New York: Mouton de Gruyter, 1998), 197–260.

26 Feng’s paper is very technical and complicated, so above only a very simplified summary is given. For more information and details, I refer to his work.

27 All linguists whose work I have read agree on this matter. The above assertion can be regarded as the “established opinion”.

In other words, a focus on the *number* of compounds in certain texts, as well as on the *kind* of compounds used, could be a very helpful support tool in establishing a relative dating of texts or parts of texts. In the case of the *Mozǐ*, it could clarify whether or not there is a temporal difference between different groups of chapters (at least if the temporal difference is significant enough), and if so, which group is likely to have been written earlier or later.

2.3 Previous applications of the method of focusing on compounds

Unfortunately, this method has not often been applied to pre-Qin texts. To my knowledge, Liu Xiaogan is the only scholar who specifically concentrated on the use of compounds in order to establish the relative dating of the *Zhuangzǐ* chapters.²⁸ He states that “among literary materials from different time periods, as long as each is adequately represented, those which use comparatively fewer compounds must have appeared earlier while those which use more must have appeared later.”²⁹ He discovered that three specific compounds, namely *daode* 道德 (“the Way and its Virtue”), *xingming* 性命 (“inborn nature”), and *jingshen* 精神 (“pure spirit”), only appeared in the Outer and Miscellaneous Chapters of the *Zhuangzǐ*, but not in the Inner Chapters (ZZ 1–7). When he investigated the historical evolution of these compounds, he found that they did not appear in early texts such as the *Zuozhuan*, *Analects*, *Mozǐ*, *Laozǐ*, and *Mencius*; but instead only started to appear in the *Xunzǐ*, *Hanfeizi* and *Lǐshǐ chungju*. From this he concludes that the Inner Chapters of the *Zhuangzǐ* were written first and that the Outer and Miscellaneous Chapters were written later.

Yuri Pines, who focused on lexical changes in texts from the Warring States Period, found that some terms can be said to occur later than others, but he did not exclusively concentrate on compounds.³⁰ The words he investigated were *nu* 弩 (“crossbow”), *ji* 機 (“trigger”), *shu* 樞 (also “trigger”), *li* 理 (“inner structure, pattern, principle”), and he also incorporated the compounds *renyi* 仁義 (“benevolence and propriety”), *wanwu* 萬物 (“all the things”), *wansheng* 萬乘 (“ten thousand chariots”), *jinyang* 陰陽 (as cosmic forces and primary binary opposites), and *buyi* 布衣 (“plain-clothed”). However, he did not incorporate the compounds *because* they are compounds, but merely because these specific terms may be later words.³¹

28 Liu Xiaogan, *Classifying the Zhuangzi chapters* (Ann Arbor, University of Michigan, Center for Chinese Studies Publications, 1994).

29 *Ibid.*, 8.

30 Yuri Pines, “Lexical Changes in Zhanguo Texts,” *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 122.4 (2002), 691–705.

31 One last remark on the method of concentrating on compounds should be made. As was pointed out in note 18 above, the relationship between the spoken Chinese of old times and the written Classical Chinese remains unclear. The fact that compounds gradually increased over time could be taken as a sign in this: it is possible that they increased precisely because the written language started to reflect the spoken language more and more. But whether or not this was the case does not much affect the value of focusing on compounds in Classical Chinese texts. Even if the increase in compounds in written texts had nothing to do with the spoken language, it still remains beyond doubt that they *did* increase over time, and so the written texts can be seen as testing material in itself, regardless of their relation to the spoken language.

2.4 Definition of the term “compound”

Before starting the investigation of compounds in the *Mozǐ*, it is necessary to clarify exactly what I understand by the word “compound” in my own research. As already pointed out above, according to Cheng Xiangqing and Feng Shengli, the trend towards disyllabicity did not only result in real “compounds”, but also in so-called “disyllabic phrases”. The difference between the two is sometimes difficult to make, and opinions differ as to what can be called a compound.

Liu Xiaogan and Yuri Pines (see above) do not take this difficulty into account, calling their terms “compounds” without defining this category. Of the other scholars discussed above, Liang Xiaohong and Liu Chenghui do not discuss the problem either. Feng Shengli, on the other hand, gives a quite narrow definition of “compounds”: ‘If A and B are two independent forms, and the semantic interpretation of A is ‘a’ and that of B is ‘b’; and if in context X, either [AB] = a, or [AB] = b, or [AB] = c, then the combination of AB is a compound in context X.’³² In other words, the phrase *guojia* 國家 would not be taken as a compound if it meant ‘the state and clan’. For it to be taken as compound, it has to express one single concept (“state” or “clan”, or something else).

Cheng Xiangqing lists four criteria on the basis of which it is possible to distinguish compounds from phrases³³: 1. the internal grammatical structure of phrases (it has to be impossible to separate the two parts by particles such as *yu* 與, *you* 又, *qie* 且, *er* 而, *zhi* 之, *qi* 其, *yu* 於, ... without changing the compound’s meaning), 2. the vocabulary meaning (the term as a whole has to express one concept, rather than the two characters each expressing a concept separately), 3. rhetorical features (it is possible to identify compounds by means of parallelism in texts), and 4. frequency of appearance (if two characters appear very frequently together, the chance is high that the phrase is lexicalized, and thus already established as a compound).

William Baxter and Laurent Sagart also have their own definition: “Any compound expression which cannot be derived from simpler expressions by regular syntactic processes must be considered a syntactic word [i.e. a compound].”³⁴ In this view, *junzi* 君子 would be regarded as a real compound, since the meaning is not the same as *jun zhi zi* 君之子, whereas *renyi* 仁義 is not a compound, because it expresses the same thing as *ren yu yi* 仁與義.

Finally, Starosta & co., although only concentrating on compounds in Modern Mandarin, give a quite broad definition that could also be applied to compounds in Classical Chinese: “Compounds consist of two or more free forms, i.e. two constituents which are themselves able to function as words and therefore have syntactic categories. The resulting pairing must itself also be a word.”³⁵ With this definition, they react against the more traditional opinion

32 Feng Shengli, “Prosodic structure and compound words in Classical Chinese,” 204.

33 Cheng Xiangqing, “Xian Qin shuangyin ci yanjiu.”

34 William H. Baxter & Laurent Sagart, “Word Formation in Old Chinese,” in *New Approaches to Chinese Word Formation: Morphology, Phonology and the Lexicon in Modern and Ancient Chinese*, edited by Jerome L. Packard, Trends in Linguistics, Studies and Monographs 105 (Berlin and New York: Mouton de Gruyter, 1998), 35–76.

35 Stanley Starosta, Koenraad Kuiper, Siew-ai Ng and Wu Zhi-qian, “On defining the Chinese compound word: Headedness in Chinese compounding and Chinese VR compounds,” in Packard, Jerome L. (ed.), *New Approaches to Chinese Word Formation: Morphology, Phonology and the Lexicon in Modern*

that a constituent element of a compound does not necessarily have to be able to function as a “word”, but can, for instance, also be a particle.

To determine “compounds” in my own research I will combine the views of Feng Shengli and Starosta & co. (who say approximately the same), supported by the techniques of Cheng Xiangqing. My definition will thus be:

Compounds consist of two constituents which are themselves able to function as words and therefore have syntactic categories. The resulting pairing must itself be a word, i.e. it has to express *one single concept*, and not two separate concepts.

Unfortunately, it is often difficult to decide whether a specific word in a specific context expresses a single concept or not. For instance, does the phrase *jiaohui* 教誨 mean “to admonish” (a “compound”), or is it the same as *jiao qie hui* 教且誨 (“to teach and to admonish”) (a “disyllabic phrase”)? In order to be able to decide this, I will take into account two more criteria:

1. The two concepts should not appear separately in the same language environment (roughly, in the same paragraph) (criterion of Cheng Xiangqing)
2. The phrase has to be a combination that appears quite frequently in the core chapters of the *Mozǐ*, so that it is relatively certain that at least in this text it is probably a compound.³⁶

3. Application: compounds in the core chapters of the *Mozi*

The method of focusing on compounds in the *Mozǐ* will possibly shed some light on the four central questions of this paper. In order to formulate an answer to these questions, I will limit my research to the five triplets that still contain three chapters: “Shang xian” (MZ 8–10), “Shang tong” (MZ 11–13), “Jian’ai” (MZ 14–16), “Fei gong” (MZ 17–19), and “Tianzhi” (MZ 26–28).³⁷ Because, in the search for possible temporal differences between the three groups (Y, H and J), the triplets that already miss one chapter (“Jieyong”) or even two chapters (“Jiezang” 節葬, “Ming gui” 明鬼, and “Fei yue” 非樂) do not reveal a possible evolution as clearly as the triplets do that still contain three chapters.³⁸

and Ancient Chinese, Trends in Linguistics, Studies and Monographs, 105 (Berlin and New York: Mouton de Gruyter, 1998), 347–370.

36 Despite these restrictions, it is still possible to apply the word “compound” to specific phrases either strictly or broadly. Thus, I may have applied it rather broadly, while another scholar doing the same research might end up with fewer compounds. Nevertheless, this would not very much affect the results of this research, for two reasons. Firstly, even if disyllabic phrases were sometimes counted instead of compounds, they would still reflect the trend towards disyllabicity, and thus a possible later date. Because, as said above, it is not only compounds that increased over time, but disyllabic phrases in general. And secondly, I have maintained the same level of strictness when counting compounds in all three groups of chapters, and thus the *balance* between them can be expected to be eventually the same (or approximately the same) in my research as in a “stricter” way of counting.

37 The “Fei ming” 非命 triplet (MZ 35–37) also still contains its three chapters, but I agree with Graham and the Brookses that it is seriously mixed up. Graham’s reconstruction partly solves the problem, but as for now, a completely reliable solution does not seem to have been found yet. For this reason, I will completely leave this triplet out of the research.

38 For the research done on the other core chapters, I refer to my dissertation.

As mentioned above, the five triplets I will investigate more closely can be divided into two groups (see table 3 and 4):

1. Chapters that contain a Y, H and J-chapter: “Shang xian”, “Shang tong” and “Tianzhi”.
2. Chapters that do not contain a J-chapter, but possibly two Y-chapters: “Jian’ai” and “Fei gong” (according to Graham, these triplets only contain one Y-chapter, and MZ 14 and 17 are later and mistakenly added to the core chapters).

All the compounds in these (fifteen) chapters will be counted, and their number will be listed in a chart. This could clarify possible differences in time between the chapters.

3.1 The number of compounds in the Y, H and J-groups

In the following lines, the total number of compounds in the five complete triplets will be investigated. If there is a temporal difference between the Y, H and J-groups, it can be expected that one group would have consistently fewer (or more) compounds than another group. At least this could be pre-supposed when the temporal difference between the three groups is significant enough. If not, then we expect to find no consistency in the division of compounds; all groups should then have more or less the same number.

Not taken into account in the core chapters of the *Mozi* are, first, the compounds that appeared in citations from older books (since these could reflect an earlier date), and second, the compounds that appeared in emendations made by Sun Yirang or Wu Yujiang.³⁹ Roughly, as soon as a piece of text in the DC Lau-Index appeared between brackets (round or square) it was not counted, unless when it indicated a mere replacement of characters within the same chapter.

In the table below a distinction has been made between the “total number of compounds” (left column) and the “degree of variation” (right column). In the former, when a certain compound, for instance *tianxia* 天下, is found 20 times, it is also counted 20 times; in the latter, this compound was counted only once. The “degree of variation” thus reflects the number of *different* compounds found. I believe this gives a better idea of a possible early or later date than does the total number of compounds, since in the latter a very early compound (as is *tianxia*) could seriously distort the picture when it appears frequently. It could give the appearance that a chapter is late because the total number of compounds is high, while in fact half of them consist of the early *tianxia*. Then the percentage of the total number of compounds does not reflect a trend towards disyllabicity, since this trend is expressed, rather, by an ever growing number of *different* words composed of two characters. Nevertheless, the total number of compounds will also be listed, for the sake of completeness.

39 Sun Yirang 孫詒讓, *Mozi jian gu* 墨子閒詁 (1894, repr. in *Mozi jicheng* 墨子集成, vols. 12–13, Taipei: Chengwen, 1975); Wu Yujiang 吳毓江, *Mozi jiao zhu* 墨子校注 (1944, repr. in *Mozi jicheng*, vols. 43–44). The reason that compounds in emendations (or in emended passages of the original text) were not counted, is because we are then dealing with possible doubtful passages.

Table 5: Distribution of compounds in the five complete triplets

	Total number of compounds	(%) ⁴⁰	Degree of variation	(%)
尚賢上 (8Y)	(35/819)	8,6	(25/819)	6,2
尚賢中 (9H)	(202/2337)	17,2	(87/2337)	7,4
尚賢下 (10J)	(133/1495)	17,8	(47/1495)	6,2
尚同上 (11Y)	(83/797)	20,8	(30/797)	7,6
尚同中 (12H)	(281/2398)	23,4	(111/2398)	9,2
尚同下 (13J)	(139/1872)	14,8	(45/1872)	4,8
兼愛上 (14Y1)	(21/563)	7,4	(4/563)	1,4
兼愛中 (15Y2)	(59/1307)	9,0	(27/1307)	4,2
兼愛下 (16H)	(149/2720)	11,0	(62/2720)	4,6
非攻上 (17Y1)	(16/426)	7,6	(8/426)	3,8
非攻中 (18Y2)	(75/1276)	11,8	(43/1276)	6,8
非攻下 (19H)	(166/2012)	16,6	(89/2012)	8,8
天志上 (26Y)	(136/1362)	20,0	(37/1362)	5,4
天志中 (27H)	(183/2302)	16,0	(78/2302)	6,8
天志下 (28J)	(166/2284)	14,6	(69/2284)	6,0

The above material can be analyzed as follows:

In the “Shang xian” triplet, the Y and J-chapter contain the same number of different compounds, and the H-chapter clearly contains the most. When one looks at the less important total number of compounds (left column), the J-chapter appears to have the most compounds, but *tianxia* 天下, *wanggong* 王公 and *daren* 大人 for instance already appear 20 times, 19 times and again 19 times respectively. This somewhat distorts the picture, and does not reflect a possible increasing trend towards disyllabicity.

In the “Shang tong” triplet, the J-chapter has the least compounds, followed by the Y-chapter; the H-chapter again contains the most. Although the number of compounds seems to suggest that the J-chapter was written earlier than the Y-chapter, one should not necessarily conclude that this is correct (this would be a view that no one has defended so far either), because the “Shang tong” triplet is different from the other triplets in an important respect: the Y-chapter is almost perfectly identical to the first half of the H-chapter (12H = 11Y + other material). Normally, in other triplets, the “shang”, “zhong” and “xia” chapters sometimes contain the same stories or arguments (but phrased differently) and every chapter is an independent whole. It never happens that a chapter is *completely* incorporated by another one, *in almost the same form*. This, however, is exactly what we see in “Shang tong”; where 11Y is not an independent whole. This difference with other triplets raises questions, and more specifically, it opens the possibility that the original 11Y was lost and that someone cut out the beginning of 12H in order to restore it. In that case, 11Y would naturally reflect the use of compounds as in 12H, but not as in its original form. That would explain the overload of compounds in a Y-chapter (compared to all the other Y-chapters).

40 The percentage given for each chapter represents the chapter’s number of characters that are part of a compound, compared to the total number of characters. Each compound contains two such characters.

If this hypothesis is correct, then according to the compounds used, we would probably end up with a Y-J-H sequence. If not, then the sequence would be J-Y-H (which would not be supported by arguments concerning the contents of these chapters). In any case, 12H contains the most compounds.

The “Jian’ai” triplet gives us a less complicated picture. MZ 14Y1 contains almost no compounds, fewer than any other core chapter (only 4 different compounds). It is followed by 15Y2, again followed by 16H. The last two chapters are relatively close to each other, compared to the seeming distance between MZ 14 and 15.

The same pattern reappears in the “Fei gong” triplet. Chapter 17Y1 contains almost no compounds (only 8 different words), distancing itself from 18Y2, again followed by 19H.

Finally, in the “Tianzhi” triplet 26Y has the least compounds, followed by 28J, again followed by 27H. In other words, the same pattern as in “Shang xian” and “Shang tong” is repeated: H contains considerably more compounds than Y and J.

The following observations can be made:

- There is a visible difference in the use of compounds throughout the core chapters. Moreover, this difference is *consistent* in some respects: the H-chapters always contain the highest number of different compounds, in all of the five triplets.
- One should not lose sight of the fact that there are two kinds of triplets:
 - * Triplets with a Y, H and J-chapter: “Shang xian”, “Shang tong” and “Tianzhi”: the H-chapters consistently contain more compounds than the Y or J-chapters. The relation between Y and J is less clear: their number of different compounds is the same in “Shang xian”; Y contains more of them than J in “Shang tong” (but this may not be reliable); and Y contains fewer of them than J in “Tianzhi”. The relation between Y and J, however, has never been called into question; all scholars who think there is a temporal difference between these two groups (the Brookses and Watanabe) put the Y-chapters first. The investigation of compounds should not be taken as the only basis to decide such matters. Moreover, the difference in the percentages of compounds between Y and J is less clear than that between J and H. When there is no consistency, no conclusions should be derived.
 - * Triplets with two Y-chapters and an H-chapter: “Jian’ai” and “Fei gong”: these triplets share the same pattern: MZ 14 and 17 (Y1) have the least compounds, MZ 15 and 18 (Y2) follow them, and MZ 16 and 19 (H) contain the most. In other words, if the number of different compounds can be taken as a more or less reliable basis to decide on a relative dating of chapters, then the view of the Brookses and Watanabe should be favoured, who put MZ 14 and 17 first, above the theory of Graham, who thinks that these two chapters are later compositions and therefore do not belong in the core chapters.

On the basis of the above material, the central questions of this paper can be summarised.

1. Is there a temporal difference between the three groups of chapters? (Graham ↔ Brookses, Watanabe)

According to their use of compounds, there is. If there was no consistency within the three groups, this would possibly indicate nothing, but there *is* a consistency: the H-group always contains the most different compounds. (support of Brookses, Watanabe)

2. Are MZ 14 and 17 the earliest of the core chapters, or are they too late to be a part of them? (Graham ↔ Brookses, Watanabe)

According to their use of compounds, they are the earliest. The compounds certainly do not reflect a late date. (support of Brookses, Watanabe)

3. If a temporal difference between the three groups is found, is the correct chronological sequence Y-H-J or Y-J-H? In other words, which group is possibly the most recent one, the J-group or the H-group? (Brookses ↔ Watanabe)

As analyzed above, the H-group always contains the highest number of different compounds. Moreover, it is not the case that its percentage is very close to the one of the J-chapters; the two groups seem to be relatively distinguished in time. It is even the case that the J-chapters are closer to the Y-chapters in their use of compounds than to the H-chapters. Accordingly, a Y-J-H sequence is favoured. (support of Watanabe)

4. If a temporal difference is found, are the three groups of chapters neatly distinguished or do they possibly overlap? (Brookses ↔ Watanabe)

To answer this question the table above needs to be rearranged according to the absolute percentage of the different compounds used in the chapters. The result is as follows:

Table 6: The order of the core chapters under investigation according to their number of different compounds

尚賢	尚同	兼愛	非攻	天志
		14Y1 (1,4)		
			17Y1 (3,8)	
		15Y2 (4,2)		
		16H (4,6)		
	13J (4,8)			
				26Y (5,4)
				28J (6,0)
8Y (6,2) 10J (6,2)				
			18Y2 (6,8)	27H (6,8)
9H (7,4)				
	11Y (7,6) ⁴¹			
			19H (8,8)	
	12H (9,2)			

I do not mean to imply that the above order is absolute. A table like the one above, derived from an almost mechanical application of the counting of compounds in a certain text can only function as a rough *indication* of some trends. Viewed as such, it seems to indicate that indeed it is the case that the different groups overlap and are not neatly distinguished. The “Jian’ai” triplet for instance would have been written completely, including its H-chapter, before the “Tianzhi” triplet had even started. This then would accord with Watanabe’s view, although there are also a lot of dissimilarities between the two tables (compare with table 4). (support of Watanabe)

41 As was explained above, this chapter should probably contain fewer compounds, and therefore take in a higher place in the chart.

After this investigation, it can be concluded that, on the basis of the research of the compounds in the core chapters of the five complete triplets, we have to favour the view of Watanabe Takashi above that of the Brookses, and the views of both above that of Graham.

3.2 The “exclusive” compounds in the three groups, and in other early Chinese texts

A more tentative part of my research on the compounds in the Mohist core chapters will not be completely included here, but its method and most important conclusions will be summarized. For the full account of the research conducted, I refer to my dissertation and to my Taipei paper.⁴²

It is possible to test not only the *number* of compounds in the Mohist core chapters, but also the *kind* of compounds used. Because, suppose the three groups (Y, H and J) contain a different number of compounds - on the basis of which one concludes that the H-chapters are the most recent ones - but in fact the compounds used in the H-chapters are all early compounds, while these in Y and J are later. This would mean that the above picture is probably false. To rule out that possibility, a further investigation of the *kind* of compounds used in the three layers was made.

To that end, I focused on the compounds that are *exclusively* used in each one of the three groups. By “compounds exclusively used” or “exclusive compounds” I mean the compounds that are *unique* for one group of chapters; the “exclusive compounds of H” for instance are the compounds that only appear in H, and not in Y or J. If it was really the case that Y is older than J, and J in turn is older than H, then one would expect to find compounds in the H-chapters that did not yet exist in the Y or J-period, or were not yet used frequently. On the other hand, if that hypothesis is mistaken and J, for instance, should be regarded as the latest group, then one would expect to find compounds in the J-chapters that do not appear in Y or H. If there was no temporal difference between the three groups, then one would probably find no compounds that are frequently used in one of the groups, but never in the others. In other words, the investigation of the compounds that are exclusively used in the three layers can function as a *confirmation* or as a *rebuttal* of the above conclusions, especially of the conclusions reached on the first question (is there a temporal difference?) and on the third question (which layer is later, J or H?)

The reason for focusing only on compounds that are exclusive for one of the three layers has already been partly explained. I think these compounds alone can tell us something about the possible relative dating of the groups; if one investigated compounds that appear in all three groups (for instance *tianxia* 天下), then that would tell one nothing about the relation between the groups.⁴³

What was done in this second part of the research again consists of two parts. First, the compounds that appear exclusively in Y, J or H were listed. Again their number was already an indication in itself. Secondly and most importantly, each of these compounds was tested on other early Chinese texts, in order to see whether or not they could be labelled as “late” compounds. It is exactly because it is almost impossible to date any pre-Qin text with relative

42 For the reference, see note 1.

43 It would also be interesting to have a look at compounds that are confined to two of the three layers. They would possibly also tell us something about the relation between the three groups. Nevertheless, this is beyond the scope of this paper.

certainty, that I have called this part of the research “tentative” and only incorporate the conclusions here. For this research, all core chapters were taken into account, and not only the five complete triplets.⁴⁴

The results were as follows:

1. It was found that the H-group contains many more “exclusive compounds” (23) than does the Y-group (only 1) and J-group (again only 1). Moreover, in Y and J the exclusive compounds appear only twice, each time in two different chapters, which is the minimal frequency required to be counted as “exclusive compound”. In the H-group, on the other hand, 19 out of the 23 exclusive compounds appear in more than two chapters. This information was taken as a confirmation rather than as a rebuttal of the conclusions reached in paragraph 3.1, since one would expect more “exclusive compounds” in later chapters than in earlier ones. Thus, the exclusive compounds seem to confirm the thesis that there is a temporal difference between the Y, H and J-group, and that the H-chapters were written last.
2. When these exclusive compounds were looked up in other early Chinese texts, it turned out that the only exclusive compound of the Y-group was an “early” compound, already used in texts prior to the earliest parts of the *Mozǐ*, and the same conclusion could be reached for the exclusive compound of the J-group. In contrast, the compounds exclusive for the H-group can for a large part be labelled as “late compounds”; 16 out of 23 compounds only start to appear in texts written around 300 BC or later. Moreover, since nine of these sixteen compounds are widespread, it is not the case that they are isolated words from which no conclusions can be derived. In sum, after this part of the research, it was again concluded that the previous results seemed to be confirmed rather than refuted.

4. Conclusion

It remains unclear whether or not the method of focusing on the number and kind of compounds used in a certain text can offer a completely reliable picture of the relative dating of parts of this text. Even though the above research as a whole could be called “experimental”, it seems to me that the focus on compounds in the core chapters of the *Mozǐ* proved to be an interesting angle for conducting research on this text.

It can be concluded that, if a focus on the number and kind of compounds used in the three layers of the Mohist ethical core chapters can offer a more or less reliable picture of their relative dating, it should be said that:

1. There is probably a rather significant temporal difference between the three layers. The Y and J-group contain fewer compounds than do the H-chapters, and their exclusive compounds are early, whereas the majority of those of the H-chapters are later compounds.
2. MZ 14 and 17 have been shown to be the earliest chapters investigated in this paper, and certainly not the latest. For this reason, they probably are part of the core chapters.
3. If there is a temporal difference between the three groups, it should be stated that the H-chapters were written last, and not the J-group. The H-chapters turn out to contain consistently more compounds, and these compounds also became commonly used only later.

44 Except for, again, the “Fei ming” triplet (MZ 35–37), and the “Fei ru” chapter (MZ 39).

4. In a theory of temporal difference between the three layers, it is more probable that the layers overlap than that they are neatly distinguished. This was shown by the fact that some H-chapters contain fewer compounds than the Y-chapters of other triplets. How this phenomenon should be explained, however, remains a difficult question.

In sum, according to the compounds, Watanabe Takashi's view seems to be the most accurate one. Moreover, when one seriously dives into the *contents* of these chapters, his view also seems plausible. Therefore, I will again list Watanabe's table, in order to be able to formulate a concluding remark:

Table 4: The evolution of the five complete triplets according to Watanabe Takashi

		兼愛上 (14Y1)	非攻上 (17Y1)	
尚賢上 (8Y)				
		兼愛中 (15Y2)	非攻中 (18Y2)	
		兼愛下 (16H)	非攻下 (19H)	
	尚同上 (11Y)			
	尚同下 (13J)			天志上 (26Y)
	尚同中 (12H)			天志下 (28J)
尚賢下 (10J)				
				天志中 (27H)
尚賢中 (9H)				

One could ask the question whether it is still useful to distinguish between Y and J when the H-chapters turn out to have been written last. In a Y-J-H –sequence, it is possible that Y and J both reflect approximately the same group. Since, they are not clearly distinguished by means of the features Durrant, Graham and the Brookses applied to them. The J-chapters also use *yu* 於 instead of *hu* 乎, and the number and kind of compounds found in the Y and J-chapters also seems to put them together. The only feature that set apart the J-group (from Y) was its formula before the citing of an ancient book (Graham). Not only is this a very small thing, but it also turns out not to be completely correct when one examines the neglected “Fei ming” triad (MZ 35–37). In this triplet, none of the citations is preceded by this specific formula, and still the material probably should contain a J-chapter. In other words, this formula is not absolute. What set apart the Y-group from the other two groups, was its *almost* entire lack of the “colloquial” particles *wei nu* 惟毋 (also written as 惟無, 惟勿, 唯毋, 雖毋 or 雖無) and *ruo gou* 若苟. They appear in J and H (not in all chapters), but as it turns out, also in the chapters 20Y and 18Y2 (*wei nu*), and 15Y2 (*ruo gou*). Therefore, these features can make the distinction between Y and J neither.

Based on the above remarks, it is probably better to say that the J-chapters *are* Y-chapters, and they more specifically share features with the so-called Y2–group, i.e. the later part of the Y-chapters. Thus, instead of labelling a group as “J”, one should probably just distinguish in the Y-layer between “early Y” and “later Y”, incorporating the J-chapters into this later group.