critical analysis of the text. Indeed, as we are very much aware today, there are important gaps between the man Confucius and the text of the ZY edited some two hundred years later. There are also important gaps between the text of the ZY and its interpretation by Zhu Xi. Therefore the reader should be reminded that the strong coherence between the man Confucius, the text of the ZY, the commentary of Zhu Xi, and the commentary of Arghiresco is mostly a hermeneutical construction. Confucius would have certainly been bewildered by the sayings and meanings attributed to him in the ZY during the Han dynasty, or in its Song and modern commentaries. Frequently, Arghiresco explains the Neo-Confucian Zhongyong in dialogue with Western philosophy, and this approach is similar to what Tu Wei-ming presented under the title Centrality and Commonality. Like Tu, Arghiresco strives to expound the inner logic of the text, but their translation differs in some key points. For example, Arghiresco translates *cheng* with natural correctness (*rectitude naturelle*), while Tu follows the traditional translation as sincerity.

The Buddhist influence on Zhu Xi’s commentary of the ZY is evoked very briefly and could have benefited from a more developed exposition. However, the Taoist influence on the ZY itself, underscored by Qian Mu 錢穆, is treated more systematically.

Arghiresco’s empathic reading shows little critical distance from Neo-Confucianism, especially concerning its political conservatism, since she suggests that positions in society reflect the moral order, and that any mismatch could be corrected through the examination system! Many important notions of the ZY, such as Shangdi 上帝, are not developed adequately (only a brief footnote), arguably because Zhu Xi did not do so. The work is quite lengthy (395 pages) with many repetitions, but perhaps it is intended as a process of internalization. This important book will surely find a wide audience among scholars and students of Neo-Confucianism and of the interpretative tradition of the Classics.

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The long-awaited publication of this magnum opus by Scott Cook, one of the leading scholars in the fields of early Chinese philosophy and the study of excavated manuscripts, is a major event in the study of early China and a cause for celebration. Cook, in Asia better known under his Chinese name Gu Shikao 顧史

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考, which also appears on the book cover, presents us with a comprehensive study and translation of the entire corpus of the Guodian 郭店 manuscripts. The great significance of this work is owing not only to its scholarly quality but also to the special importance of its subject matter. The cache of bamboo manuscripts discovered in 1993 in the modestly sized tomb number one of Guodian in Hubei 湖北, is exceptional in several respects. The 731 slips bearing a total of over 13,000 characters form the largest corpus of Warring States prose text recovered so far in a controlled archaeological excavation. It is theoretically surpassed in volume by the find in tomb no. 36 of Cili 慈利 Shibancun 石板村, Hunan 湖南, excavated in 1987. However, those ca. 800–1000 slips with approximately 20,000 characters are so badly damaged that the text, apparently mostly historical narratives, could not be reconstructed as yet, so the Shibancun manuscripts have remained unpublished. Another exceptional feature of the Guodian find, dated to the end of the fourth century BCE, lies in the content of its texts. While the greater part of early Chinese manuscripts found in one particular tomb is usually of a technical nature—be it tomb inventories, administrative documents, divinatory, legal, military, or medical texts—the manuscripts recovered from the Guodian tomb without exception fall into the broadly defined category of politico-philosophical literature. It is probably owing to this special quality of this find that its publication in 1998 (Guodian Chu mu zhujian 郭店楚墓竹簡, edited by Jingmen shi bowuguan 荆門市博物館, Beijing: Wenwu) found an unprecedented resonance. Only a few years after this publication, articles and books devoted to these manuscripts already numbered in the thousands, reaching from paleographic studies of one or a few individual characters to interpretations of entire texts or groups of texts and attempts to integrate these into the history of early Chinese philosophy.

A certain disconnect between the various fields of expertise involved in the preparation, publication, and study of these important new sources (e.g., archaeology, codicology, paleography, textual criticism, history, literature, and philosophy), as well as inadequate methodology (or lack of explicitness on the part of the authors of manuscript editions with regard to their methodology) have been a major impediment. This problem is only beginning to be remedied, as scholars become more familiar with the problems involved in studying early Chinese manuscripts. Scott Cook’s impressive work is a major step in this process, as he demonstrates—in a manner that is informative for the specialist and at the same time accessible to non-specialist readers as well, even those beyond the broad field of sinology—the enormous complexity involved in the study of ancient Chinese manuscripts. The book exemplifies how the diverse fields of scholarship mentioned above need to be integrated in order to establish, translate, and interpret this type of source material in a reliable manner. To this end, Cook presents us with the first study and translation of an entire corpus of ancient Chinese manuscripts in an unprecedented combination of comprehensiveness and richness in detail. Similarly detailed studies of Guodian manuscripts have been undertaken before, but they are either restricted to a part of the corpus, such as Liao Mingchun’s Guodian Chu jian Laozi jiaoshi,1 or they are much more narrowly focused on the palaeographic

1 Liao Mingchun 廖名春, Guodian Chu jian Laozi jiaoshi 郭店楚簡老子校釋 (Beijing: Qinghua daxue chubanshe, 2003).
aspect of establishing the manuscript text, such as the series *Kakuten So kan no kenkyū*, started by a team of authors around Ikeda Tomohisa in 1999.\(^2\)

Cook’s comprehensive approach is reflected in how the book is organized in two parts (not coextensive with the two volumes): Part One consists exclusively of the almost monograph-length “Introduction” (185 pages). Part Two, “Texts and Translations” (over 750 pages), is devoted to the presentation and study of the individual texts of the corpus. Three appendices, bibliographic references, and a useful, reasonably sized index conclude the book.

Part One is divided into six chapters, A through F, each subdivided into subchapters, according to subject matter. The content of the chapters is arranged in a logical sequence, starting from the physical and historical context of the manuscripts, proceeding first to the codicological and then the paleographic aspects of establishing the text, later to its presentation and critical reading, and finally to its placement in intellectual history.

In chapter A, “Nature of the Find and Dating of the Tomb,” Cook delineates the historical context of the manuscript corpus, steering clear of the speculative identification of the tomb occupant as the teacher of the Chu 杜 crown prince—a theory based on the misreading of the inscription “cup of the eastern palace” on a cup in the tomb as “teacher of the eastern palace.” Cook does not commit himself to one reading or the other (although the paleographic evidence is unequivocal), but he commendably acknowledges that, in any case, “at this point . . . [it] can only be a matter of speculation” (p. 9) who exactly the tomb occupant was and what the use and intended audience of the texts were. Cook agrees with the generally accepted dating of the tomb to ca. 300 BCE and reminds his readers that this does not allow us to date the texts themselves to the same time but merely provides a *terminus ante quem*.

Chapter B introduces the reader to the complicated business of reconstructing the manuscripts and their texts from the disconnected bamboo slips recovered from the tomb. Sensibly cautioning his readers against overconfident conclusions as to what the material properties of the manuscripts tell us about the significance of the texts at the time, Cook explains how such features (such as size, format, positions of binding, as well as script and punctuation) are used in the reconstruction of the individual manuscripts and how textual features allow us to reconstruct their texts. To this end, it is crucial to maintain a clear distinction between textual units and codicological units. In some cases, several texts were probably included in one manuscript, while cases of one text extending over several distinct manuscripts are more difficult to prove. The phrase “bamboo texts” in the title of the book undermines this distinction between texts and their material carriers and might have better been replaced by “bamboo manuscripts” or just “the texts of Guodian.” A more consequential case of inattention to this issue surfaces in Cook’s grouping of texts. When he numbers the texts of the eighteen groups of slips that were published in the 1998 Wenwu edition, he chooses to subsume the three physically separate manuscripts with *Laozi* counterparts under one category, as others have done before him. This practice creates the impression that the text of all three manuscripts at that time already

belonged together as parts of one greater text. This in turn could support the prejudice that the Guodian *Laozi* counterparts were extracted from a greater compilation that already existed at that time—a theory to which Cook fortunately does not subscribe.

In his use of text titles, Cook generally adheres to the Wenwu edition, which for some time to come will remain the standard reference to the Guodian manuscripts. Now that several different reconstructions of the texts have been proposed and different titles used for these respective texts (none of the Guodian manuscripts contained an original title), it is helpful to maintain one common standard of reference. Bearing in mind that the titles should not be understood as more meaningful than they are (i.e., technical references to the text of certain groups of slips), the single exception where Cook uses a different title, that is, “Cheng zhi” 成之 for what was first published as “Cheng zhi wen zhi” 成之聞之, seems unnecessary. Although in his reconstruction of the text “cheng zhi wen zhi” is no longer a continuous phrase nor does it occur at the beginning of the text, to use “cheng zhi” alone, an object clause at the end of a sentence somewhere late in the text, is hardly an improvement to the title. Moreover, using a different title than the customary one might mislead readers into assuming that the titles have a historical source value. This is not a trivial matter. Titles have a function and naturally affect the reception of a text. It seems advisable to specially remind readers that whether or not manuscript texts were titled is an important historical circumstance. Untitled texts should be treated as such, and it needs to be emphasized that we should understand the titles assigned to the manuscripts by their editors as no more than technical devices, that is, convenient references to the manuscripts that facilitate our conversation about them.

Chapter C, “The Chu Script and Calligraphic Features,” covers vast and diverse fields: it starts out with the concept of regional scripts, followed by a series of concise discussions of difficult characters. The few representative examples that Cook selects give the reader a sense of the magnitude of difficult paleographic issues involved in establishing and reading the texts. That some still uncertain readings of characters are presented as fact probably results from the necessarily condensed form of the discussion. The following part of the chapter, somewhat vaguely named “Chu Scribal Peculiarities,” in essence discusses orthography. Cook’s division of script styles (in his terminology “calligraphic types”) follows, with one minor exception, the five groups suggested by Li Ling 李零 and in almost identical form by others as well. Especially since Cook discusses the importance of such script features as a criterion used in the reconstruction of manuscripts, it is unfortunate that he treats the crucial distinction between styles (or calligraphic types) of script and hands in a cavalier fashion, for example, by stating that “the three ‘Laozi’ manuscripts . . . reveal largely the same calligraphic hand.” One may have different opinions on whether several hands are involved or only one, or one may declare it impossible to decide, but there can be no “largely” about such a yes/no question. The chapter concludes with a section on punctuation. While Cook does not explain his concept of punctuation, it becomes clear that he defines the term narrowly. Fortunately, he does not neglect the marks he excludes from “punctuation,” but discusses them under the separate rubric of “other markers” (p. 63).
Chapter D, “Reading the Texts,” begins with the principles of transcription of manuscript text. Cook’s transcription practice largely follows that of the Wenwu editors. However, here and in his presentation of the texts later in the book, it does not become clear according to what criteria he decides when to differ from the Wenwu. For example, he maintains the Wenwu transcription <兆 left of 見> of a character written in the manuscript as <見 left of 兆>, while in the following sentence he changes the Wenwu transcription <心 left of 為> to reflect the actual vertical arrangement <心 under 為> in the manuscript (p. 226). More consistency or explanation of the underlying principles would have been useful. The following section discusses principles of textual criticism involved in determining the correct reading of manuscript characters, followed by another section explaining the phonetic motivation in some of the characters, still discussed under the problematic rubric of “loan characters” and “loan words.” The chapter concludes with remarks on rhymes in the Guodian texts.

Chapter E, “The Guodian Manuscripts in the Context of Warring States Intellectual History,” is the most extensive part of the “Introduction.” Cook exercises a commendable degree of caution in claims of an ideological coherence of the entire corpus. The chapter gives a very useful overview of suggested affiliations of Guodian texts with “intellectual lineages” in early China. While the association even of transmitted Warring States texts with certain historical figures is complicated enough and often rather tenuous, claiming affiliations of excavated texts to certain individuals or groups of people seems unrealistic. As the known names of authors, teachers, or lineages can only be a part of a much greater number of those that existed at the time, the likelihood that the origin of newly discovered texts must lie with any of the known authors is just not high enough to establish affiliations. To seek a historical placement of the texts in terms of textual similarities or ideological affinities seems more realistic. In the same vein, the subchapter “Shared Philosophical Doctrines in the Guodian Texts” could have distinguished more clearly between actual doctrines and “mere” concepts (or what Cook calls “notions”). Concepts can, of course, be shared concepts by texts propounding different doctrines.

The “Introduction” concludes with a very brief “Overview of Prior Scholarship,” providing helpful orientation in the extremely detailed annotations to the texts in Part Two of the book. This part consists of sixteen chapters, treating all three separate “Laozi” manuscripts as one group, while “Taiyi sheng shui” 太一水, although almost certainly part of the same manuscript as “Laozi C,” is discussed separately in chapter 2. Each chapter starts with a comprehensive introductory part, sometimes including several subchapters. Apart from the lack of transparency in how original manuscript characters are rendered, the presentation of manuscript text is consistent and clear. The decision to present the manuscript text with modern punctuation intermingled with original punctuation marks is a serviceable compromise. In the very useful synoptic presentation of seven Laozi versions in Appendix A, however, it would have been better to indicate only the original punctuation for the Guodian and Mawangdui 馬王堆 manuscript versions. The modern punctuation of the transmitted counterparts would easily have ensured readability. In the copious footnotes annotating the manuscript text, Cook provides much more than arguments that justify his own reading of the text. He gives an almost complete overview of the paleographic discussions of the texts.
This provides specialized readers with a most convenient platform from which to start their own further research. For the non-specialist, it might be somewhat difficult to winnow out the paleographic chaff from this mass of information. Cook’s translations stay in a sensible area on the scale from literal to free. He underscores structural features of the original text in the typographic presentation of the English translation as well as by indicating rhymes in the Chinese text. I do not find it useful to indicate only rhyme groups instead of at least the reconstructed finals, but it is clear that Cook decided this deliberately, and here is no place to discuss this complicated issue.

All three appendices of this book are tremendously useful. Following the presentation of various Laozi versions in Appendix A, Appendix B gives an overview of the sequence of slips for each text, in many instances differing significantly from the Wenwu publication. The reasons for these arrangements are all laid out in the respective chapters. Appendix C adds another 100 pages to the bulk of this book by presenting the texts once more as a “running translation,” uninterrupted by annotations. This is not a mere redundancy: it is very valuable to display the texts in their entirety in a manner that presents them not mainly as a problem, but as what they were intended to be—texts. This is a useful part of the book not just for the undergraduate classroom, as Cook suggests, but even for specialist readers who want to gain an undistracted overview of the texts’ content. The publisher is to be applauded for accommodating Cook’s excellent design in all its detail and generous use of space, in order to achieve this presentation of the texts. The book is beautifully produced throughout and, with its high-quality paper and apparently very solid binding, suited very well for the purpose that it will surely have to serve: to be used for decades to come as a major reference to the Guodian manuscripts. What Scott Cook has accomplished in this monumental work deserves high praise and gratitude. It also deserves the honor of not being used henceforth as an unquestioned final word on these manuscripts, but rather as a solid platform from which to advance our understanding of this important material yet further.

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Not that long ago—as recently as the beginning of this century—there was a dearth of good, comprehensive, and up-to-date textbooks and general surveys of Chinese religions. The lack of reliable books that provide broad coverage and illuminate the big picture stood in contrast to the increasing volume of specialized studies that deal with various aspects of Chinese religious history, literature, doctrine, or practice. A general reader or an instructor preparing a course on Chinese religions usually had to fall back on earlier volumes, such as Laurence Thompson, Chinese Religion: An Introduction (Wadsworth, 1969; also available in later editions), Christian Jochim, Chinese Religions: A Cultural Perspective (Prentice Hall, 1985), Daniel Overmyer, Religions of China: The World As a