

Why Philosophy Is Not “Extra” in Understanding the *Analects*

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The Original Analects. By E. Bruce Brooks and A. Taeko Brooks. New York: Columbia University Press, 1998. Pp. x + 342.

The Original Analects by E. Bruce Brooks and A. Taeko Brooks is an extraordinary book in many ways, and is clearly required reading for anyone concerned with early Confucian thought. While it fails to substantiate most of its more radical claims, it performs an invaluable service by forcing scholars of the text to take seriously the fact that the *Analects* is a heterogeneous collection of writings representing different time periods and a variety of concerns—a fact that has often merely been given lip service by students of Confucianism, this reviewer included.

Unfortunately, few readers will find it a readily accessible book. The style is reminiscent of the late Peter Boodberg: the translation is awkward yet etymologically precise, careful attention is paid to sinological detail, and there is a marked fondness for neologisms and idiosyncratic scholarly conventions. Some of these new conventions (the method of citation, for instance) represent a slight improvement over standard practice, but many (such as the romanization and dating) are off-putting and unhelpful. It is not at all clear, for example, why it is less “culturally parochial” (p. 2) to indicate a date’s relationship to the birth of Christ by preceding it with the number “0” rather than following it with the letters “B.C.E.”; this arbitrary decision simply creates another stylistic barrier for the reader to overcome.

The Brookses argue for a radical reorganization of the chapter order in the received text, and identify large numbers of interpolations within each individual chapter. They also claim that the text was composed over a much longer period of time than has generally been accepted—the later strata, in their account, being put together as late as the third century B.C.E. If correct, this would have significant philosophical implications. This is illustrated most dramatically in Appendix 5, where they demonstrate that placing chapters 1–3 before chapter 4 (identified by them as the earliest chapter) significantly alters the manner in which these chapters are interpreted. For instance, it is proposed that an original emphasis on public, political virtue can be seen as shifting to an emphasis on the personal and domestic (p. 312), and it is argued that an original focus on public effectiveness was warped by a later obsession with scholastic “learning” or *xue*—the term *xue* itself shifting in meaning from “imitation/emulation” (*xiao*) of politically active models to mere book learning (p. 27). The Brookses similarly identify what they claim to be a shift in the meaning of *ren* from a martial virtue to a ritualistic one (p. 254), resulting from an increased emphasis upon ritual practice (*li*) by the later members of the Lu Confucian school. “The debate on whether *ren* or *li* is central to Confucianism is thus solved,” they proclaim. “*Ren* is central to *Confucius*, whereas *li* is central to *Confucianism*” (p. 16).

The power of this argument is somewhat weakened by the fact that it is largely circular. For example, an exclusive focus on public virtue in chapter 4 is achieved only by eliminating passages 18–25 of the received text, and the main rationale for eliminating these passages is in turn the fact that they “emphasize domestic and personal virtues, in contrast with the official focus of 4: 1–17, and were presumably added to legitimize a later doctrinal shift in that direction” (p. 208). Indeed, much of the Brookses’ micro-periodization of the text (the dating of individual chapters) is similarly speculative or circular in nature, while their macro-periodization (their overall chronological framework) also rests upon quite shaky ground. With the exception of their treatment of chapter 4, they very seldom cite hard internal linguistic or historical evidence to support their dating; the only firm dates that can be gleaned from the entire argument are the use of a posthumous epithet for Ai-Gung in 6.3 and the reference to the death of Zengzi in 8.3, which indicates that these passages must have been written after 469 B.C.E. and 436 B.C.E., respectively (p. 205). More usually, an actual historical reference from the text is taken to be a coded reference to a much later event, and this later event is then sometimes turned around and used as “proof” for another date further on in the book.¹ While such metaphorical uses of historical accounts are, of course, quite common in early China, it would seem inadvisable to rely upon such a possibility as “proof” for one’s dating scheme.

The Brookses’ metaphorical interpretations of historical references are really only convincing if one has already accepted their macro-periodization scheme. This scheme—the bedrock assumption upon which the fragile edifice of further assumptions is built—is the so-called “accretion theory”: the theory that the text of the *Analects* was composed at a constant rate, in distinct bands each one chapter thick. Added to this assumption is the claim that the fragmentary nature of chapter 20 of the received Lu version of the text can best be explained by assuming that its accretion was cut off by the Chu conquest and the absorption of Lu in 249 B.C.E. Arguing that the text did not begin to be composed until after Confucius’ death in 479 B.C.E. (based on the fact that his sayings are always introduced by a third-person formula), this gives a 230-year period over which the text has “accreted.” By further comparing the Lu version of the *Analects* with the Qi version—which was reportedly two chapters longer than the Lu version and whose compilation was similarly interrupted by the conquest of Qi in 221 B.C.E.—the Brookses arrive at a “rate of accretion” of 12.7 years per chapter, or two chapters per generation. Beginning with chapter 4 (which they identify as the earliest stratum of the text, based on some fairly convincing internal linguistic evidence), every pair of two chapters is then identified with a specific successor to the headship of the Lu branch of the school of Confucius.

This accretion theory is an excellent example of a metaphor from the natural sciences being inappropriately applied to the humanities. Texts are not like redwood trees or coral reefs, and there is no reason for us to think that the *Analects* was not composed in a fairly haphazard manner. It may be the case that chapters or parts of chapters were added in groups to a multi-chapter original core, or that the text simply represents an anthology of early Confucian writings from different time periods

that was cobbled together by a single editor at a very specific date. Similarly, the fragmentary and extremely heterogeneous nature of chapter 20 of the received text suggests to me that it represents a dustbin for material that could not be worked into other chapters, rather than the “stump” of a chapter whose growth had been violently interrupted. Furthermore, although the third-person nature of the Master’s sayings suggests that he himself did not compose the text, there is no reason at all to see this as “proof” that the Master was no longer among the living when the text was composed. In fact, we would be rather surprised to find such an early text being composed in the first person.

Additionally, the Brookses often find evidence for their dating scheme in passages that are supposedly responses to the Mohists, Legalists, or Daoists, or to the Mencian and Xunzian branches of Confucianism. One is then led to wonder why these rival thinkers are never mentioned by name, as was the standard practice by the time of the *Mencius* and the *Xunzi*. Going beyond such obvious objections, one could further argue that the Brookses’ narrowly sinological focus blinds them to some of the deeper philosophical problems with their account. That is, their investment in their elaborate Just-So chronology, their fascination with sinological arcana, and their creativity in identifying “coded” references to events and personages causes them to overlook a set of larger philosophical issues that contradict their dating scheme. For instance, although it is claimed that chapters 12 and 13 were written either by Mencius himself or under his direct influence, we in fact do not find anywhere in the *Analects* even a dim awareness of the highly developed conceptions of human nature that formed the basis of the debate between Mencius and Xunzi. We similarly look in vain for evidence that any of the authors of the *Analects* were familiar with the elaborate psycho-physiological techniques of *qi* cultivation advocated in the “Inward Training” and “Techniques of the Mind” chapters of the *Guanzi*—techniques that apparently exerted such an influence on subsequent thought that the authors of the *Mencius*, *Zhuangzi*, and *Xunzi* had no choice but to appropriate them. We do, indeed, begin to see hints of a larger concern with *qi* and human nature in (respectively) *Analects* 16.7 and 17.2, but in comparison with the *Guanzi* or *Mencius* even such late passages are philosophically quite primitive.

There is also nowhere in the *Analects* a trace of the more specific conception of the “heart/mind” (*xin*) that is assumed in late Warring States texts—the picture of the heart/mind as the locus of discrimination (*bian*), reasoning, and language use—and the authors of the *Analects* were apparently also unaware of the later Mohist theories of language and logic that no late Warring States author could afford to ignore.² The internal philosophical and terminological evidence would thus suggest that no portion of the *Analects* was written after the early fourth century B.C.E. We could thus take the text as a whole as representing the state of the early Confucian school as it existed prior to the philosophical explosion of the “Hundred Schools” period and the Mencian innovations demanded by this increasingly sophisticated intellectual milieu, and this in turn allows us to hold a view of the text and its place in pre-Qin Chinese thought not terribly different from that dictated by the traditional chronology.

The Brookses' lack of philosophical orientation reveals itself as well in their resolutely political rendering of the text. Practicing a rather extreme hermeneutics of suspicion, they systematically discount the possibility that philosophical developments of early themes by later compilers might actually be genuine attempts to elucidate the Master's teachings and make them relevant to a new age. Rather, doctrinal innovations are generally seen in terms of political stratagems designed to enhance the prestige of one line of disciples over another. A similar politicization is revealed in much of the commentary to the text. For instance, the comment on *Analects* 1.3 (p. 146) assumes that the dislike for "glibness" expressed in this passage is merely a peevish slander aimed at those more successful than the Lu Confucians in gaining an official hearing; the possibility that the author of this passage had a philosophical reason for being suspicious of facile talkers is never explored.

On the other hand, the Brookses are on the whole to be commended for the commentary that accompanies their translation, for it represents a gold mine of sinological detail and often provides some quite original insights into the text. For instance, the description of Japanese *gagaku* in the commentary to 3.23 (p. 85) makes this passage come alive for the reader, while at the same time rendering its message considerably more intelligible than any other interpretation I have read. Indeed, the issue of its periodization scheme aside, *The Original Analects* represents an invaluable sourcebook for students of the text. It allows them entrée into a rarified scholarly atmosphere that cannot but enrich and deepen even the specialist's understanding of the text, and this is perhaps its greatest virtue. Whatever one may in the end think of the validity of the arguments made by the Brookses in support of their accretion theory, one cannot help but be impressed by the immense erudition and linguistic acumen expended in the effort.

To summarize, then, if we eliminate the more speculative and unsubstantiated elements of the Brookses' argument, it would seem that we have not advanced much beyond the periodization scheme proposed by Cui Shu (1740–1816): chapters 1–10 represent an early core³ to which 11–15 and (last of all) 16–20 were added. The Brookses are no doubt correct in identifying later interpolations within the earliest stratum, and the archaic linguistic features they identify in chapter 4 may indeed indicate that chapters 1–10 do not represent a strictly chronological progression. In the final analysis, however, we might have to admit that a definitive micro-periodization of every chapter of the *Analects* is something that may forever remain beyond our ability to realize. The power of the Brookses' effort derives, then, not so much from their specific conclusions, but rather from their success in shaking to the foundations our traditional conception of the *Analects* and forcing us to consider seriously the philosophical difficulties in approaching such a heterogeneous and stratified text.

Notes

- 1 – Consider, for instance, the argument that the "Three Families" of Ji criticized in chapter 3—who ruled the state of Lu during Confucius' lifetime—are actually

meant as “symbols” of the Qi ruler, who usurped the title of King in 342 B.C.E. (p. 79). This, in the Brookses’ view, “establishes” chapter 3 as a product of the mid-fourth century B.C.E. and in turn helps to support their macro-periodization.

- 2 – *Analects* 13.3, which discusses the “rectification of names” (*zhengming*), could be considered an exception, but it is—as many students of the text have noted—a philosophically rather anomalous and isolated passage. Additionally, there is internal linguistic evidence suggesting that 13.3 is a later interpolation: as the Brookses note on p. 190 (following Arthur Waley), the “chain argument” used in this passage is a late stylistic development.
- 3 – Some scholars, such as Arthur Waley, have suggested that chapters 3–9 represent the original core, arguing that chapters 1–2 lack the thematic unity of 3–9 and that chapter 10 is “irrelevant.” I would perhaps grant the first point, but agree with Itō Jinsai (1627–1705), whose views are reported by the Brookses on p. 201, that chapter 10—a portrait of Confucius, the perfected ritual master, in action—serves a crucial role as a thematic “cap” for the chapters that precede it.

Response to the Review by Edward Slingerland

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No one knows better than ourselves, after years with the text, how far any brief commentary on the *Analects* must fall short of doing justice to its importance and its difficulty. We are thus heartened to learn that our efforts have made *LY* 3 : 23 “come alive” for Professor Slingerland, and that he finds the commentary in general to be “an invaluable sourcebook” that can “enrich and deepen even the specialist’s understanding of the text.” On several points at which he is less convinced we may add a word here. Chief among these are: (1) our generally “scientific” and “skeptical” approach; (2) whether that approach establishes an advance on the position reached by Tswēi Shù; (3) whether our argument, especially as respects *LY* 3 and the latter half of *LY* 4, is circular; (4) whether we are right on several points of philosophical importance, such as the *Mencius/Sywndž* situation and its relation to the *Analects*; and (5) whether our accretional model for the text is appropriately derived and successfully applied.

1. We admit to preferring a result-neutral, and also a skeptical, methodology. We feel that a historical inquiry biased toward any contemporary interest, philosophical or other, does not deserve the name of historical inquiry. We also note that, apart from the decontextualizing effect of the almost total loss of Warring States political history, great pressures have been exerted on these texts by the fact of their

canonical position over two Imperial millennia. We feel that this self-evident fact justifies, and even requires, the suspicion that any original political dimensions they may once have contained have been artificially attenuated in the orthodox interpretation. Is it intrinsically likely that the preserved debate was carried on without reference to the civil and military conflicts that consumed the attention of the rest of society? Not to be skeptical toward the traditional view at such points would, we feel, fail to appreciate the problems of the text and the problems of the circumambient culture that have for so long impeded their solution.

2. The progress of *Analects* scholarship since Tswēi Shù is reviewed at the beginning of Appendix 1. It is there shown that his advance over the Hú/Itō view has in turn been refined by Waley and Pokora on the structural side (Waley's argument from the mythic evolution of the Dzŷngdž persona *within the confines of the text* is particularly telling) and by Kimura, Lau, and others on the formal side. It is made clear on page 207 note 25 that we have moved beyond these valuable but isolated suggestions to recover *the entire formal logic of the text*, bringing the insights of Tswēi Shù and his successors to the point where they constitute a critical mass, which by its implications, in our opinion, makes inevitable a new and unprecedented view of the text as the result of a process of continuous, but orderly, growth over time.

3. Is that conclusion reached on circular grounds? It is shown in the rest of Appendix 1 that this advance makes it possible to identify interpolations in the text simply by their incongruity with the design of the chapter in which they occur, rather than by their content, using arguments such as earlier scholars have brought to bear piecemeal on problematic passages like LY 13:3. However convincing in detail, such arguments might fairly have been open to objection as circular. Since, however, we identify interpolations on formal or linguistic grounds (in the case of LY 4:18–19, by linguistic usages *in the preceding sayings*, which are not only distinctive but specifically archaic; see indeed p. 208, but higher up; also pp. 203–204), it is an independent confirmation and not a circular statement that, as shown in Appendix 2 (and again, with evidence of absolute date, in Appendix 3), the *Analects* minus its interpolations not only fully confirms Tswēi Shù's insight as to the lateness of LY 16–20, but also reveals in the received chapter sequence LY 4–20 a process of continual and historically plausible evolution on the content level. It was always open to alert readers to see that Tswēi Shù's criteria for a distinctive LY 16–20 were unevenly distributed, the "numerical categories" being largely confined to LY 16, whereas the "stray bits of ancient lore" do not appear until LY 18, and reach a climax of free composition à la Shū only in LY 20:1. The Tswēi data for LY 16–20 were thus inherently dynamic, implying both obsolescence and development of literary devices within that range, and already suggesting a process rather than a single, fixed authorial or editorial style.

Our results extend that dynamic situation to the whole text. They cannot be accounted for by any layer model, whether the Itō/Tswēi/Waley model or the quite different models proposed by Takeuchi and others, but only on a hypothesis of continual augmentation. In the task of placing the preposed chapters, including LY 3,

within that linear development of *LY* 4–20 (p. 206), the use of content evidence is inevitable. The sort of covert reference to current events that we see in *LY* 3 (and in *LY* 16, which equally conveys a sense of stylistic “heat,” and in the more inscrutable and wary *LY* 19) is conceded by Slingerland to be “quite common in early China.” That agreed fact is surely warrant for invoking such explanations in particular cases. In complaining that the *Analec*t*s* does not openly identify such philosophical antagonists as the Micians, Slingerland seems to misconstrue the logic of a text composed in the name of a past figure and *deriving its authority from that figure*. Such a text does not normally violate that presumption by directly referring to persons who would not have been either past or present *to that figure*. Thus the living Sywǎndǒ, in the 03d-century “human nature” debate, can refer to “Mencius” (dead since ca. 0303), whereas the Mencians cannot symmetrically have their eponymous spokesman refer directly to “Sywǎndǒ” (died after 0238). We ruefully admit that greater naïveté on the part of the *Analec*t*s* authors would have facilitated the job of later philologists, but we must take the text as its authors left it. In the not so covert references to the Tyén rulers of Chí in *LY* 16:2–3 (ca. 0285), they left it transparent even for modern readers. All the more, surely, were passages like these unproblematic for their intended audience.

4. We think that on further acquaintance Slingerland will find that our argument is linear, and also that the view of the *Analec*t*s* that it reaches is far more coherent and convincing than the problematic and at points self-contradictory view to which he appears to have become accustomed (that the *Analec*t*s* was composed “in a haphazard manner” or “cobbled together by a single editor,” whether at a time when the Master was “among the living” or in the “early fourth century”). As to specifics, we are confident that he will, for example, eventually appreciate that the link between *LY* 12–13 (ca. 0326–ca. 0322) and the historical Mencius of the genuine *MC* 1 speeches (closely datable to ca. 0320f; see pp. 9 and 97) cannot yet be expected to feature the “human nature” debate between the later Mencian school and Sywǎndǒ, which, with Sywǎndǒ himself, belongs to the early-middle 03d century and is echoed, quite on schedule, in *LY* 17 (ca. 0270; see pp. 161 ap 17:2a and 171). His expectation that the psychophysical theories that underlie the Mencian position in that debate should also have been *held* by the contemporary *Analec*t*s* would be reasonable were it not refuted by the entire tenor of the Warring States argument, in which the texts and their votaries defend contrary positions on just such issues.

As to meditation techniques per se, we have argued at length that the Lǔ Confucians were aware of them as early as the 05th century (the emblematic figure, for the *Analec*t*s* as for the *Jwǎngdǒ*, is Yén Hwéi; see our note to *LY* 9:11 *et saepe*). But they later rejected them (and Yén Hwéi [*LY* *15:31]; we think our observation that Yén Hwéi turns up, among 03d-century texts, not in the *Analec*t*s* but in the *Jwǎngdǒ*, is a strong argument somehow missed by Tswéi Shù) and strongly opposed the *DDJ* theorists who tried to build a theory of government on them (*LY* 16:4). It would be consistent with this stance that they would keep a certain distance from the Mencian developments of these theories. Slingerland’s conclusion that the *Analec*t*s* as a

whole represents early Confucianism “as it existed prior to the philosophical explosion of the Hundred Schools period” not only ignores these probabilities, but fails to take account of the diagram on page 249, showing that Hundred Schools echoes do exist in the text, and that they are entirely confined to the chapters from *LY* 12 onward, that is, to the latter half of the work. This, in our view, rather neatly mirrors the fact that the Hundred Schools situation itself falls *midway in the Warring States period*.

On this and other points we can only think that Slingerland will in the end be persuaded by our view of the Warring States texts not as arbitrary structures emerging and combining in a vacuum but as rational growths rooted in the period and its problems, having a physical location and an organizational continuity behind them and a distinctive agenda in front of them and being shaped over time by contact (largely adversative) with other points of view on all sides of them.

That conclusion, though not reached by a philosophically biased argument, has its philosophical interest, perhaps most notably in accommodating and explaining many separate and seemingly incompatible facts about the text. We continue to feel it a virtue of our view that it resolves a dispute between Chinese scholars (who see *rín* as central to Confucius’ values) and many Western scholars (who accept Fingarette’s reading in terms of *lǐ*) by showing that they refer, respectively, to the 05th-century world of Confucius and the 04th-century world of the Kǔng-dominated *Analects* school. The disturbing, and sometimes verbally identical, echoes of the *Gwǎndǔ* (in the sudden statecraft focus of *LY* 12–13), the *Mwòdǔ* (in the *LY* 17 dispute over the three-year mourning), and above all the *Jwāngdǔ* (in the hermit stories of *LY* 18) disappear in a vision of creative contact with these texts. An early Confucian method of teaching by single gnomic maxims (05th century) is seen to be replaced by a more philosophical consciousness that requires of its body of maxims both internal consistency and external constancy (late 04th century). These and similar results make possible the writing of future histories of Chinese thought not as a series of watertight arbitrary positions, but as an integrated fabric of individually evolving, increasingly sophisticated, and mutually interactive positions in the larger historical context. The text has in this way been made more readily available, not only to the philosopher but also to the modern reader of any disciplinary affiliation as well, and, may we also say, to the heirs, in all nations, of the rich but long-misunderstood Chinese classical tradition in any of its aspects. We think that this utility will readily impress itself on those who lend themselves even briefly to the new view.

5. As “accretional” hypotheses go, ours for the *Analects*, and for the *Dàu/Dǔ Jīng*, with which, in our view, it is intertwined, are risky due to their specificity: they are open to refutation by archaeology. We propose that the *DDJ* grew from a ca. 0350 beginning to an enforced end in the Lǔ conquest year 0249. The implication is that if a version of that text were recovered from a site datable within that span, it would lack certain higher-numbered chapters. As it happens, the archaeologically recovered Gwòdyèn 1 tomb texts, which were not available to scholars until May 1998, three months after publication of *The Original Analects*, include three florilegia

drawn largely from the later, governmental chapters of the *DDJ*. These constitute an archaeological referendum on the hypothesis.

The occupant of the Gwōdyèn 1 tomb was the tutor to the Heir Apparent of Chǔ, probably the future Kǎu-lyè Wáng,¹ whose accession was in 0262. It was not until the accession of his father in 0298 that the future Kǎu-lyè Wáng became Heir Apparent and could have had a tutor appointed for him. The death of that tutor could not have occurred before that year and may have been at any time between then and the abandonment of Jīng-mǐn as the capital of Chǔ in 0278. The tutor is unlikely to have died immediately after his appointment, so that the earliest years of the range are unlikely, and since there are stylistically later tombs in the same cemetery, the last years of the span are also unavailable as plausible dates for Gwōdyèn 1. A valid working hypothesis would be the midpoint of 0298–0278, or ca. 0288.

What does our *DDJ* hypothesis predict for a copy of that work datable to that year? In a partial statement of that hypothesis published in *Sino-Platonic Papers* 46 (1994), we assigned *DDJ* 37 to 0309, and *DDJ* 70 to 0274 (pp. 72–73). In *The Original Analects*, we further committed ourselves to seeing in *LY* 16:4, 8, and 11 responses to *DDJ* 43, 53, and 54–55, respectively. The *LY* 16 chapter date is ca. 0285, but these particular passages would slightly predate the Sùng-related material and would thus be from perhaps ca. 0290. The related *DDJ* passages, then, ought to have been in circulation, at least in Lǔ, before the Gwōdyèn date. We additionally saw in *LY* 17:6 a response to *DDJ* 65, which would be earlier than the *LY* 17 chapter date 0270, but not necessarily as early as the Gwōdyèn date. Then a Gwōdyèn *DDJ* sample of ca. 0288 would probably include chapters up to *DDJ* 55, might (depending on fine-tuning of the tomb date and the passage dates) include chapters up to *DDJ* 65, but should not include *DDJ* 70 or higher-numbered chapters. Any significantly different result would be a serious problem for the *DDJ* accretion theory and the associated *Analects* accretion theory. As it happens, the total Gwōdyèn *DDJ* inventory for all three of the florilegia (*Gwōdyèn Chǔ-mù Jú-jyǎn* [1998], p. 111) is as follows: *DDJ* 2, 5, 9, 13, 15–19, 20, 25, 30–32, 35, 37, 40, 41, 44–46, 48, 52, 54–57, 59, 63–64, and 66.

Quod erat demonstrandum. This independent confirmation may be of use to Professor Slingerland and others in permitting them to repose greater confidence in our argument for the chronology of the text, thus making our conclusions as to the evolution of early Lǔ Confucianism less problematically available to them as well.

Note

1 – Thus Professor Li Xueqin, Director of the Institute of History, Chinese Academy of Social Sciences, in a lecture at Dartmouth College on 22 October 1998; translation by Professor Sarah Allan, who also checked a summary from our notes as correctly reflecting Professor Li's remarks. We are also indebted to Professor Xu Shaohua of Wuhan University, who gave a paper and slide demonstration on the Gwōdyèn tomb and its stylistic affinities at the 10th Conference of the Warring States Working Group at the University of Massachusetts at

Amherst on 25 April 1998, and again participated in a discussion of the Gwōdyèn texts at the 11th Conference, on 10 October 1998. His firsthand conclusion is that Gwōdyèn 1 is stylistically later than the group of tombs including Bāushān 1, which (see *The Original Analects*, p. 116) is self-dated by included documents to ca. 0316, and is stylistically earlier than another group of tombs that must directly precede the abandonment of the Jīng-mún site in 0278. The stylistic termini for Gwōdyèn 1 are thus a point an unknown distance after 0316 and another point an unknown distance before 0278. If we assume equal offset in both cases, the midpoint of that range is the same as the midpoint of the range 0316–0278, or ca. 0297. This first approximation can be thought of as leading to the connection with the accession of Chǔ Chǐng-syāng Wáng in 0298. The tutor could have been appointed that year, and unless later promoted would have retained that title until his death, whenever that occurred. The termini for his tomb thus become 0298 and 0278, with the extremes unlikely, and the remaining inferences following as in the text.

Reply to E. Bruce Brooks and A. Taeko Brooks

Edward Slingerland

I will briefly reply to some of the Brookses' numbered points in turn.

Point 1. My problem with the Brookses' "skeptical" approach is not that they take into account the possible influence of extra-philosophical forces (military conflicts, struggles for dominance among disciples, etc.) on the development of the *Analects*, but rather that they focus almost exclusively on such extra-philosophical forces as explanatory factors. While this is certainly in accordance with the practice now fashionable in the humanities of seeing expressions of human thought as mere epiphenomena originating in social/political power struggles, it is hardly "unbiased." It presupposes that social/political forces are the primary factors driving the development of philosophical thought and thereby rules out as a matter of course any other sort of explanation. It is not at all clear that the success of reductive explanations in physics or chemistry translates into a mandate for reductive explanations in the humanities, and the Brookses' approach seems to me another example of the model of the natural sciences being inappropriately applied to the *Geisteswissenschaften*. I would merely urge the Brookses to apply their skeptical knife not only to the assumptions of the orthodox Chinese commentarial tradition but to their own methodological assumptions as well, and avoid dismissing the former assumptions simply as a matter of policy.

Points 3 and 4. With the regard to the circularity of their argument, I did acknowledge in the review that there are a few instances where the Brookses provide

solid formal, linguistic, or historical evidence for their dating. I am nonetheless concerned because there are only a few isolated places where such evidence is provided, and because the few hard dates the Brookses are able to provide are all still within the fifth century B.C.E.—that is, well within the more traditional range of possible dates for the formation of the text. I would be much more receptive to the Brookses' account if at least *one* firm date could be identified by means of external evidence that would place portions of the *Analects* at the extreme end of their dating range (i.e., in the fourth or third century B.C.E.). What I see instead is that these later dates are arrived at by means of elaborate assumptions built upon other assumptions, which in turn rest upon a few isolated hard dates—the whole edifice being supported by “echoes” of possible influence by other schools or speculation about “coded” references to current events. I did indeed acknowledge that such coded references are common in early China, but to rely upon them as “proof” of some otherwise speculative date seems to me ill advised. Again, I would urge the Brookses to apply some of their healthy skepticism to their own founding assumptions.

With regard to my questioning of the supposed echoes of competing schools in the later books of the *Analects*, my point is not merely that there is no direct reference to the alleged targets of the text (which could conceivably be deliberate), but more significantly that nothing in the *Analects* betrays an awareness of the sophisticated intellectual milieu in which the authors of the *Mencius*, *Zhuangzi*, and *Xunzi* lived and breathed. While it is conceivable that clever fabricators may have avoided direct reference to figures and texts not available to the historical Confucius, even the Brookses see the later, more narratively complex books of the *Analects* as responses to a “more philosophical consciousness that requires of its body of maxims both internal consistency and external constancy.” That is, later compilers of the *Analects* were clearly *not* so obsessed with avoiding anachronism that they were unwilling to break with the more authentically archaic, “gnomic” style in order to keep pace with the stylistic and philosophical developments of their own age. By this same logic, the fact that even these later passages fall far short of demonstrably later Warring States texts in terms of stylistic and philosophical sophistication argues against their being contemporary “responses” to these texts.

Point 5. The archaeological evidence provided here is fascinating. While I still find it to be something less than “independent confirmation” of their entire *Analects* dating scheme—it *does* directly concern only the *Daodejing*, and the link to the *Analects* requires many of the same assumptions that I already find a bit questionable—more evidence of this sort would certainly go a long way toward increasing my confidence in the Brookses' chronology.