THE STUDY OF WESTERN ZHOU HISTORY: A RESPONSE AND A METHODOLOGICAL EXPLICATION

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Five years after the publication of *Landscape and Power in Early China* in 2006, the journal of *Early China* has invited five distinguished scholars with diverse disciplinary focuses to discuss its implications for the field. As the author I am certainly deeply honored by the continuing attention the field has given to the book since its day of birth, and I am very grateful to these and other scholars, who have taken extraordinary care to read and think through the book and generously offered their inspiring comments.[1] On the other hand, this is a welcome opportunity for me not only to repay my intellectual debts by answering at least some of the challenging questions, but also to reflect on the methodological basis of the book and its non-traditional (if tradition is measured by conventions) disciplinary positioning. *Landscape and Power* emerged from a phase of my scholarly career that I consider important but which I am now glad, with the writing of this response, to be able to put behind me.

In fact, there was a time in 2004 when I was wondering whether I should go ahead with the publication of *Landscape and Power* or make an effort to first push through the publication of what eventually became my second book with Cambridge University Press, *Bureaucracy and the State in Early China* (2008), which I was already writing at that time. Indeed, a few close friends recommended the second option because *Bureaucracy and the State* clarifies the political and social system of the Western Zhou state, a necessary precondition for understanding the Western Zhou's decline and fall, and because it is methodologically simpler and easy to defend. The point was well taken: *Landscape and Power* explores a somewhat narrowly defined question; it is tightly organized in structure, and utilizes a wide base of sources. In contrast, *Bureaucracy and the State* addresses broad questions about the political system of the

1. To my knowledge, there have been at least four reviews of *Landscape and Power* in Western languages of varying lengths: Gideon Shelach (*Journal of Asian Studies* 67.1 [2008], 281–84), Charles Sanft (*Journal of Asian History* 43.1 [2009], 84–85), Olivier Venture (*Études chinoises* 27 [2008], 241–50), Sarah Nelson (*Cambridge Archaeological Journal* 18 [2008], 126–27); two in Chinese: Xu Feng 徐峰 (*Kaogu* 考古 2010.1, 90–96), Tian Xudong 田旭東 (*Zhongguo shi yanjiu dongtai* 中國史研究動態 2008.12, 27–30).

Early China 33–34, 2010–2011

https://doi.org/10.1017/S0362502800000316 Published online by Cambridge University Press

Western Zhou on the basis of a narrower range of sources, the bronze inscriptions, which by and large are the most legitimate records for such purpose. Because of the breadth of questions it discusses, *Bureaucracy and the State* took a longer time to develop, with a part of the research dating back to my study in the University of Tokyo in Japan in 1990–1992, while other components of the book developed gradually over the following twelve years. The decision to go with *Landscape and Power* first was both an academic one—because the study of geography offers a necessary foundation for the reconstruction of Western Zhou political system—and a career decision, because I was not at all confident that my work on the Western Zhou government could be published before my tenure clock ran out. Had *Bureaucracy and the State* been published first, *Landscape and Power* would have been necessarily improved by some of its arguments. Although it is perhaps not an ideal situation to have *Landscape and Power* published first, I am still grateful that I was in a position to have made such a decision to be able to continue to read and write as a scholar.

Scholars who work on two closely related book projects must face the issue of how to divide topics between the two so as to not to publish the same discussion twice. Such a "division of labor" can cause both books to be less perfect, but the hope is always for the reader to read one book in light of the other. Keeping this situation in mind can help clarify some of the issues raised by Yuri Pines, for instance, the importance of the concept of "Mandate of Heaven" in the formation of the Western Zhou state. Early discussions of this issue by Creel, Hsu and Linduff, and later by Robert Eno, are well known to scholars, and on two points I was able to take the issue further. First, I understood the "Mandate of Heaven" as not only a powerful form of propaganda that legitimated the Zhou conquest, but more importantly as a "Theory of the State." This "Theory of the State," on the one hand, underlay the political logic of "delegacy" as the fundamental principle of the Western Zhou state, and on the other, afforded the Zhou a unique understanding of their historical mission to shape a "new world" and create a "new people." Second, on the basis of bronze inscriptions, I demonstrated changes in that concept, showing how the recipient of Heaven's Mandate was transferred from King Wen alone to being fixed on the conjoined body of *Wen-wu* (King Wen and King Wu) as Zhou founder in the mid-Western Zhou, and how thereafter no other Zhou king could be said to have received the mandate. These points have been discussed in considerable length in *Bureaucracy and the State* (hereafter as *BS*, 33, 294–95, 301–4), but they were not taken up in *Landscape and Power* (hereafter as *LP*).

Pines, based on his work on the Eastern Zhou period, makes another inspiring observation: even down to the Warring States period, the many

https://doi.org/10.1017/S0362502800000316 Published online by Cambridge University Press

"kings" never called themselves "Sons of Heaven," suggesting that the Zhou king's role as such was in fact unique and commanded irreplaceable religious supremacy.[2] However, I confess that my discussion of the concept of the "Mandate of Heaven," in *Bureaucracy and the State*, is only relevant to approaching an understanding of the foundation and the salient features of the Western Zhou political system. In the study of Zhou's decline in *Landscape and Power*, I have not discussed how this particular concept might have worked to weaken the Zhou regime; on the contrary, I agree with Pines that the concept can be seen as an element that essentially affirmed the power of the Zhou royal institution. In general, I think we know too little about the religious aspects of the Western Zhou in comparison to what we know about Shang religion due particularly to the lack of a large quantity of divinatory records similar to those from Anyang. But I still think that a systematic discussion of the religious system of the Western Zhou can be helpful and that this task would be ideally taken up by scholars who were trained as intellectual historians, such as Pines himself, and are thus better equipped than I am to interpret the spiritual and metaphysic world of the Zhou mind.[3]

Another criticism of Pines' relates to the lack of substantial discussion in *Landscape and Power* of the so-called "Late Western Zhou Ritual Reform," but this is again an issue that I have addressed in length in *Bureaucracy and the State*, although therein it was discussed under the rubric of "Mid-Western Zhou Transition" (*BS*, 34–38). The reason that I do not use the term "Ritual Reform" is simply because I disagree with this formulation. But I confess that even there I did not fully explain the basis for my disagreement, something I should like to do here thanks to Pines' criticism. But let me first acknowledge that at least three eminent scholars of the Western Zhou period in the West including Jessica Rawson, Edward L. Shaughnessy, and Lothar von Falkenhausen have written to endorse the "Ritual Reform" or, in a more dramatic sense, "Ritual Revolution." On the one hand, their respective publications have made the "Ritual Reform" a nearly commonly held paradigm in Western Zhou Studies in the West. On the other, the paradigm is found straddling a serious chronological split—while Rawson and Shaughnessy speak about a "mid-Western Zhou Ritual Reform (or Revolution)," considering the change

2. The inscription on the early seventh century B.C.E. bronze bells cast by Duke Wu of Qin proclaims that Qin had separately received the Mandate from Heaven. Nevertheless, it is true that no Qin ruler was ever called "Son of Heaven."

3. An exemplary recent study of Western Zhou religion is Martin Kern, "Bronze Inscriptions, the *Shijing* and the *Shangshu*: The Evolution of the Ancestral Sacrifice During the Western Zhou," in *Early Chinese Religion*, 2 vols., ed. J. Lagerwey and M. Kalinowski (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 2008), 143–200.

https://doi.org/10.1017/S0362502800000316 Published online by Cambridge University Press

to have taken place largely within the time context of the mid-Western Zhou (roughly in the time of King Mu, according to Shaughnessy, or Kings Yih, Xiao, and Yi, according to Rawson), Falkenhausen insists on calling it the "Late Western Zhou Ritual Reform" (*LP*, 102, n. 34). Pines seems to have been strongly influenced by Falkenhausen's dating of the "Reform," which is based largely on his dating of a group of bronzes cast by Xing 癲 to the reign of King Li, which I believe to have been wrong.[4]

The reason for my disagreement with the "Reform" paradigm is indeed simple, but it relates to the nature of sources and the plausibility of arguments that can be made based on them. To argue for a "Ritual Reform" is to insist on the existence of a *historical process* in which certain new standards were consciously planned and systematically implemented by an "agent" or "agents," as in all reforms in human history. But the evidence deduced to support the "Ritual Reform" in the Western Zhou so far comprises only changes in the decorative patterns of bronze vessels and the ways in which they are grouped in funeral contexts. It is a historiographical argument based on almost no historical documentation, and it is a conceptual overkill, the value of which is undermined by the gap between material culture and the written records. It is certainly possible for something like a reform or revolution to have taken place in the ritual system of the Western Zhou state. But attractive as the idea is, it has not been sufficiently demonstrated on the basis of the current evidence. No written records have been used to detect the "Reform" and no known human agent has been held to have been responsible for it; all that has been shown so far are changes observable in the material culture that are too ambiguous to be transferred directly into a specific historical process. But, the problem is more than just the choice of terminology—the argument serves to exclude other possible explanations of the changes we see in archaeology.

It was against this background that I discussed changes that took place during the mid-Western Zhou in the larger context of the "Mid-Western

4. On this point, see Edward L. Shaughnessy, "Review: *Chinese Society in the Age of Confucius (1000–250 BC): The Archaeological Evidence*, by Lothar von Falkenhausen," *Journal of Asian Studies* 66.4 (2007), 1130–31. In addition to the reasons Shaughnessy pointed out, the main obstacle to Falkenhausen's dating, in my view, is the fact that the Xing *xu* 癲盨 (*Yin Zhou jinwen jicheng* 殷周今文集成 [hereafter *Jicheng*], no. 4462) vessel is hooked up through multiple links in its inscription with a group of bronzes that also include the Shi Yu *gui* 師艅簋 (*Jicheng*, no. 4277), Shi Chen *ding* 師晨鼎 (*Jicheng*, no. 2817), and the Jian *gui* 諫簋 (*Jicheng*, no. 4285) that are all commonly dated to the reigns of King Yih and King Xiao. There is no way for the Xing *xu* to be dated to the reign of King Li disregarding the dates of all other bronzes linked to it. See Li Feng, "'Offices' in Bronze Inscriptions and Western Zhou Government Administration," *Early China* 27 (20003), 16–20.

https://doi.org/10.1017/S0362502800000316 Published online by Cambridge University Press

Zhou Transition." Viewed in this larger context, the changes in bronze art become less peculiar or inconsequential and can be better understood as a part of the more extensive political, social, and cultural transformation that took place gradually during the mid-Western Zhou period. Although we still cannot define the full range of this transformation, the bronze inscriptions combined with the textual evidence allow us to identify at least the following changes: a shift from large-scale expansion to defensive warfare, a split between the central court and some regional states, irregular patterns of royal succession, disorder in government service, ritualization of official appointments, the emergence of appointment inscriptions, the bureaucratization of the central government, tense competition for economic resources in the royal domain, disputes related to land sale and incursion, royal grants of property in piecemeal fashion, etc. (*BS*, 34–38). Although we still do not know how the changes in bronze art were related to the changes highlighted above, a "thicker," more comprehensive explanation considering a combination of political, social, and economic factors can better explain the changing fashion in bronze art. Therefore, before definite written records can be brought to bear on the so-called "reform" or "revolution," I adopt a more cautious position to treat the changing fashion in bronze art in the context of the "mid-Western Zhou transition."

I do not think it is entirely unfair to question *Landscape and Power* for what it does not do, as Pines politely admits himself. It is only that the whole truth, for the reasons mentioned above, can take two books to present, and that may still not be enough to do it justice. I confess that this "division of labor" between the two books also influences the discussion of Western Zhou geography in *Landscape and Power*. Cook points out that I have combined all available data, successfully in her view, to argue for a complex and sophisticated state, illustrated in the Topographical Map of China (*LP*, xvi), "that has all the markings of an 'empire' although he [Li] resists using this word." I must confess that the linear border shown in this map gives a wrong impression of uninterrupted Zhou control over a "land mass" in eastern China. Much to the contrary, in *Landscape and Power* I have clearly argued against a linear border to demarcate the Western Zhou state (*LP*, 174–75). However, as Cook recognizes, the small scale of the topographical map allows for no input of site names as on the regional maps, and this leaves the drawing of a line the only option to show the spatial dimension and location of the Western Zhou state. While it demonstrates the longest reach of the Zhou's political power from its centers in the Wei River valley, it is inaccurate, and indeed, misleading if understood as the linear boundary of the political Zhou state.

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As it stands, the geographical dimension of the Western Zhou state is roughly comparable to that of the Assyrian Empire of the eighth century B.C.E. However, geographical scale is not the only qualification for empire, although states that are too small and too homogeneous simply cannot qualify as empire. I resist using the word "empire" for the Western Zhou mainly because, among other reasons, centralized direct administrative control was never intended for the whole realm of the Western Zhou state (in Creel's interpretation, it was intended for such a purpose), which distinguishes it from many well-known empires in world history, particularly in China. Therefore, Cook is quite right to point out that the key question is how much of the great land mass (which actually is quite small in comparison with the Qin and Han Empires) was directly under Zhou family control. The situation is better explained in *Bureaucracy and the State.* Here I use the model of settlement-based state to illustrate the salient political features of the Western Zhou. The "settlement state," as I have discussed in *Bureaucracy and the State,* means two things: 1) That the Western Zhou state did not exist as an integral geographic whole clearly demarcated by linear borders, but was marked by the locations of the *yi*-settlements as the geopolitical units in which the state existed. It was the aggregation of thousands of pieces of lands woven together by the political power of the state. 2) That there were empty spaces that existed within the state's perceived "territory"; and there were also overlaps between the *yi* clusters of different regional states, as certain settlements controlled by one state might have been located closer to the core of another (*BS*, 296–97). Due to these conditions, none of the detailed regional maps actually shows a linear border of any kind; instead, I only marked the locations of the various sites in their geographical environment (*LP*, 29, 302, 320, 333).

This issue leads to further questions about how I use archaeological evidence in conjunction with the written records to study the historical-political geography of the Western Zhou state in *Landscape and Power* (Chapter 1 and Appendix I). There, it is definitely not the simple operation of using the find-spots of pottery and bronze vessels of Zhou style to mark the presence of a Zhou population, or even the focal points of the political Zhou state. The use of both archaeological and textual data can easily lead some, for instance Sarah Nelson, without a careful reading of the discussion and unable to fully understand the complexity of the book and the methodology behind it, to think that I am suggesting simple correlation between the two types of information.[5] But this is

5. See Sarah Nelson's short review of *Landscape and Power* in *Cambridge Archaeological Journal* 18 (2008), 126–27.

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not the case. Being a field archaeologist myself, I am fairly aware of, and have been constantly confronted in my research experience by the discrepancy between the distribution of material types and human community, and have indeed carefully discussed this problem in light of the relevant anthropological-archaeological literature in the introduction of *Landscape and Power* (*LP*, 18–24, especially 23–24). In principle, I accept the methodology proposed by David Keightley to reconstruct Shang geography, which looks at the overlap between Shang sites mentioned in the oracle bone inscriptions and the discovery of sites of Shang cultural contents in areas where the inscriptions indicate they should be located.

However, in *Landscape and Power* this is done in a more subtle and systematic manner. First, the correlation was not established through individual finds linked to particular historical events fixed in the written record. Instead, the correlation was established whenever possible through comprehensive analysis of the "historical process" in conjunction with the archaeological process supported by material findings (*LP*, 23). In order to do this, in every large region studied, archaeological data and the written records are first examined separately, with the *archaeological study always going first* to lay groundwork for the recovery of cultural space (in *Landscape and Power*, I use the analytical model that assumes "layers of space" including at least a "cultural layer" and a "political layer"; see *LP*, 23). Second, historical analysis is based on information from contemporaneous bronze inscriptions, not necessarily from the region in question, but which mention historical developments there. Further, these are considered together with records about Zhou (understood as groups with allegiance to the Western Zhou state, not restricted to the ethnic Ji stock) activities in the region in the transmitted historical texts. The purpose is to impartially use the two types of information to reveal the local *historical process* and to show changes in the region's political relation to the Western Zhou state. Third, this analysis is enhanced by inscribed bronzes excavated from the particular region identifying the sites of certain regional states mentioned in the transmitted records or describing their political relations with the Zhou court. This sort of analysis enables us to actually pin down a number of strongholds of Zhou political power in the region. Fourth, the archaeological analysis is divided into two levels: at the elite level, bronzes and elite sites are analyzed to reveal the condition of the elite culture in the region; at the non-elite level, I examine pottery in order to identify both Zhou and non-Zhou cultural elements and the spatial distribution of each. The reasons for using this multilayer model of analysis are clearly stated in *Landscape and Power* and there is no need to repeat the discussion here (*LP*, 23–24, but more substantially on pages 76–82).

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Thus, the conclusions of the book with respect to the spatial dimensions of the Western Zhou state are also of different layers: When inscriptions offer clear documentation of a region's political relation to the Zhou court, as in the cases of the Kei 克 bronzes from Liulihe 琉璃河 in Beijing (*LP*, 335–36), or the Qi 啓 or Yu 敔 bronzes from Huangxian 黃縣 in Shandong (*LP*, 308–9), or the Changzi Gou 長子狗 bronzes from Huangpi 黃陂 in Hubei (*LP*, 325), I suggest that the region was under the domination of the Western Zhou state. According to the "settlement state" model, this does not mean that every piece of land in the region was under direct control by Zhou (see above). But this too must be understood in and supported by the broad cultural context of the region, which must show evidence of a predominant Zhou material culture. Therefore, the Yihou Ze *gui* 宜侯矢簋 (*Jicheng*, no. 4320), despite the fact that it records the granting of a state by the Zhou king, is rejected as evidence of Zhou influence over the Yangzi delta, because it was found in a predominately non-Zhou culture setting. In fact, I have concluded that Zhou power had never controlled regions to the south of the Huai River based on the study of Zhou's war with the Huaiyi 淮夷 in inscriptions (*LP*, 322–24). Luckily, in contrast to the Shang case, Western Zhou archaeology has afforded us sufficiently informative inscriptions from clear Zhou cultural contexts in all large regions mapped out in the book to show that they form a convincing network of political relations linked to the Zhou centers. This also poses a demanding task for the archaeologists who wish to understand the situation and the conclusion of the book. In other words, they must do what historians do to read and understand the political contexts of these inscriptions. However, when inscriptions that clearly indicate political relations to the Zhou center are missing from a region, but in such case Zhou cultural elements are fully evident at both elite and non-elite levels, as demonstrated by the study of the upper Qingshui River and upper Wei River regions in the west, only a general conclusion was drawn. There I state that "the Zhou extended their cultural and *possibly* also political influence over regions to the west of the high Liupan Mountains" (*LP*, 54). Note the two-step wording here and the word *possibly* which clearly differentiates the cultural layer of the space from the political layer (which is less certain in this case). The conclusion about political space was drawn at the level of possibility here, but it is a possibility based on sound reasoning. Once again, the larger archaeological context offers the best explanation. It has been stressed in the book that compared to the bronzes, as generally understood among the archaeologists, pottery wares were usually locally manufactured and tend to be more closely tied to local traditions.

In Western Zhou archaeology, certain types of Zhou cultural traits were found in a context predominated by another culture, or *vice versa*, thus

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being discontinued from their own cultural environment. Archaeologists with good knowledge of the material culture of the period usually have no difficulty identifying such cultural contrast especially in the western and eastern peripheries (Shandong) of the Zhou realm. Arguably such sharp contrast reflects the *possible* migration of human communities or individuals, and as a fine recent research example, Lothar von Falkenhausen has used the distinctive cultural traits from Tomb no. 2 in Yimencun 益門村, Baoji 寶鷄 (in this case, bronze objects with no inscriptions) as indicating the presence of perhaps a very rich "alien" in the core region of Qin during the Warring States period.[6] The case is very similar to that of Yucun 宇村, which I have examined in detail in *Landscape and Power* (*LP*, 180–83), though the latter tomb was located in a more peripheral area during the late Western Zhou. Again, traits must be understood within the larger cultural environment. Linduff is certainly right in saying that "material traits reflect culture, not people"; then, it is just so natural that people and material cultures should be studied with reference to each other. It is the larger cultural context in which certain traits are found that makes all the difference.

This differentiability of cultural traits in archaeology is particularly relevant to the study of "frontiers" as "ambiguous spaces that lay at the margins of direct political control by the metropolitan states where local and colonial ideas and practices were reconstructed transculturally" (Linduff, ref. Ferguson and Whitehead 2005: xii).[7] The nature of the frontier is discussed in length in the last section of Chapter 4 in *Landscape and Power* with relation to the northwestern frontier of the Western Zhou state (*LP*, 174–87). There I consider the frontier, based my argument on a variety of studies,[8] as "an intermediate or transitional zone where different cultures meet, different ethnic communities coexist, and different types of economies are mixed" (*LP*, 175). Thus, my conception of the "frontier" indeed comes in very close agreement with the concept of the frontier as a "contact zone," as suggested by Linduff (ref. Pratt).[9] I confess that I did not consult the works listed by Linduff, which would have been

6. See Lothar von Falkenhausen, *Chinese Society in the Age of Confucius (1000–250 BC): The Archaeological Evidence* (Los Angeles: Cotsen Institute of Archaeology, UCLA, 2006), 224–28, 240–41.

7. R. Brian Ferguson and N. L. Whitehead, *War in the Tribal Zone: Expanding States and Indigenous Warfare* (Santa Fe, NM: School of American Research Press, 2000 (2nd ed.), xii.

8. See, for instance, Owen Lattimore, *Inner Asian Frontiers of China* (New York: American Geographical Society, 1940), 55–58, 238–42; Nicola Di Cosmo, *Ancient China and Its Enemies: The Rise of Nomadic Powers in East Asian History* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 2; C. R. Whittaker, *Frontiers of the Roman Empire: A Social and Economic Study* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1994), 71–73, 84, 222–37.

9. Mary Louise Pratt, *Imperial Eyes: Travel Writing and Transculturation* (London: Routledge, 1992), 6–7.

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helpful to my discussion of the northwestern frontier of Zhou. But I think that based mainly on works written by historians in this case (in fact, Whittaker employs both textual and archaeological data in his study of the Roman frontier), I was able to achieve a similar conceptualization of "frontier" as a series of zones that permitted cultural ambiguity and interaction.

Furthermore, in *Landscape and Power,* using solid archaeological evidence typified by the relationship between the Siwa and Zhou cultures, I have demonstrated the nature of the frontier, in two ways. First, I show how sites belonging to the two cultures are mixed in the broad "contact zone" of eastern Gansu and western Shaanxi with the eastern-most Siwa 寺窪 sites located close to the Zhou central area, and the western-most sites of Zhou cultural contents located near the heartland of the Siwa culture. Second, I show that traits belonging to two cultural traditions are found even at a single site, for instance, Jiuzhan 九站 in eastern Gansu, which make the site culturally permeable and ambiguous (*LP*, 179). But in either situation, the difference between the two pottery production traditions is so dramatic that we can separate their traits without much doubt. It was further demonstrated there that during the late Western Zhou a third cultural tradition has penetrated the frontier zone possibly from the northern steppe region, as the mixture of Zhou and steppe styles of bronzes in the single tombs in Yucun 宇村 shows (*LP*, 179–82). On top of this archaeological analysis, I have also tried to recover the complex political relations in this "contact zone" using information in the bronze inscriptions. In the large context of the book, this clarification of the complex nature of the northwestern frontier laid a rich cultural background for the study of the fall of the Western Zhou with respect especially to the roles played by such polities as Shen 申.

I am particularly taken with the comments offered by Maria Khayutina and Chen Zhi who have both apparently taken extraordinary care to read the book and examine its details. Some of their comments concern the specific points argued in the book which I will discuss further below, but altogether they help survey the methodological foundation of the book in mainly three areas: 1) the position of geography in the study; 2) the use of bronzes and bronze inscriptions as valid sources to study Western Zhou history and the ground for their accurate dating; and 3) the use of transmitted textual sources. They raise important questions concerning the basic premise on which *Landscape and Power* stands; therefore, below I will discuss these questions in some detail.

The question Khayutina raised about geography is of a different kind from Cook's question, which is mostly concerned with the historical geography of the Western Zhou and its methods. Instead, Khayutina asks about the disciplinary roles of geography in the study of history, and

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in this regard, her understanding of the issue is quite acute. She points out that in *Landscape and Power,* geography is not treated as merely the static background of history; instead, it is studied "in order to reveal reasons, circumstances and consequences of human struggles for economic resources and political power" (Khayutina's comments). In other words, geography is an essential factor in the historical process which it helps us explain. To fully exploit the interpretive values of geography, I worked with Columbia's GIS specialist to design a series of maps according to the most professional standards. These maps carry high precision layers carefully generated from currently available GIS datasets for China and show accurate distances between archaeological sites dotted at calculated elevations. As Khayutina judiciously pointed out, they are not "illustrations, but are parts of the argument." They not only allow us to see the spatial relationship between historical sites but also allow us to explain their relationship to the landscape. For instance, geography helps us understand why the war with the Xianyun 玁狁 through the Jing River valley was so critical to the survival of the Western Zhou dynasty, and why such sites like Yangzishan 羊子山, Xiaogan 孝感, and Lutaishan 魯臺山 were located in a line along the Sui-Zao corridor in the middle Yangzi region (*LP*, 320–21, Map 18). But at a higher level, the study of geography offers us new grounds to reinterpret the real political roles of the Zhou regional states and the strategic ambiguity facing the Western Zhou state. As Chen Zhi quotes, "the Zhou found themselves striving hopelessly between two strategic goals: the integration of the Zhou state that depended on continuous royal engagement in affairs of the east, and the survival of the dynasty on condition of security of the west" (*LP*, 4). However, it would be inaccurate to call this approach "geographical determinism," which I have in fact purposely warned against in the introduction (*LP*, 18). There, I stress that the impact of geography on history must be understood in a dialectical way, and indeed many great human accomplishments are the result of overcoming geographical limits. Therefore, geography must be studied in relation to the rise of fall of political power (*LP*, 141–42).

I think the key issue here is the presence of human agents who are themselves creators of certain elements in geography. There can be no geography without the participation of the self-conscious human agent. For the same reason, I defined landscape as "a system of arrangement, a structure, or a system of human management of the land's features such as mountains, villages, and rivers, created by natural forces, together with features such as settlements, roads, and defenses created by human forces" (*LP*, 18). In other words, geography can explain *why* and *how* a human society acts in certain ways in coping with its environment. But it cannot explain *how successfully* it does so, or *why it fails* to do so. Such

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explanations have to be based on reasons generated by the historical process. The comparison of the Western Zhou state to the Han and Tang Empires suggested by Chen Zhi is a very interesting one, as these later Chinese empires also had to deal with the geographical division between western and eastern China and the difficult roads connecting them. But they were posed at a much higher level of social and technological development and possessed an advanced system of communication through which a superior bureaucratic machine extended its control to every corner of the empire. Empires were built on principles and administrative strengths that differed from the early states, and their historical courses were influenced more by geopolitics than by geography. In short, geography offers sensible explanations, but it needs to do so with respect to specific historical contexts.

On the issue of using bronze inscriptions, Khayutina is justified to ask for a thorough explanation of the methodological basis for the systematic application of dating, not clarified in *Landscape and Power*. I cannot recall why my decision was to leave this methodological issue out of the book, but perhaps it was because the issue had been discussed not long ago (at that time) in Shaughnessy's *Sources of Western Zhou History*.[10] As the field continued to evolve over the past twenty years, and as this issue concerns the legitimacy of using inscribed bronzes in both *Landscape and Power* and *Bureaucracy and the State*, I would like to discuss it here. In my view, there are largely four different approaches to the dating of bronzes and their inscriptions: historical, calendrical, art historical, and archaeological. The historical approach looks into information in bronze inscriptions as a basis to establish historical connections. The most often used method is dating by personal names. Of course royal names are most valuable for such a purpose because they place the bronzes directly in royal reigns which constitute the basic chronology of the Western Zhou period. Except for cases where such names were used as posthumous titles, there are about eight bronzes that clearly mention the presence of certain Zhou kings. Names of officials or important historical events known from the transmitted Western Zhou sources can also be used for such purpose. Another element used for dating is the temple name of the Zhou kings; since the temple of a Zhou king must postdate his reign, these names, particularly those associated with the temple compound called "Kang Gong" 康宮, were systematically used by Tang Lan 唐蘭 to date bronze inscriptions.[11] There are problems in using personal names as clues for

10. See Edward L. Shaughnessy, *Sources of Western Zhou History: Inscribed Bronze Vessel* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1991), 106–55.

11. See Tang Lan 唐蘭, "Xi-Zhou jinwen duandai zhong de Kang Gong wenti" 西周金文斷代中的康宮問題, *Kaogu xuebao* 1962.1, 15–48.

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dating simply because a person could have lived through more than one royal reign and different persons could have shared the same name. This is particularly problematic when the names are indeed aristocratic titles such as Jingbo 井伯 or Rongbo 榮伯, which could be passed down along lineage lines. However, the relatively rich information we learn from the inscriptions often allows for the recovery of larger historical contexts in which the relevant names appear and which can be used to establish links between bronzes.

On the very basic level, we are not using the names alone, but consider the social status and political roles of these people and even the spatial settings in which they appear. We have even better clues when two or more names co-occur across different bronzes that can be dated very closely in time, and in fact, we do have a fairly large number of inscriptions, including most appointment inscriptions, that offer strings of names. These inscriptions allow for the reconstruction of personal networks across royal reigns, such as that centering on Jingbo during the mid-Western Zhou, demonstrated by Shaughnessy,[12] or workgroups, such as those I have shown with regard to Shi Hu 師虎 (*BS*, 133–34). With varying degrees of intensity, such networks can also be established for other periods of Western Zhou history, hence giving us solid grounds for dating newly discovered inscriptions. Thus, despite the drawbacks noted above, the historical approach, using internal evidence in the inscriptions, stands as an effective and indeed the most commonly used method of dating bronzes.

The calendrical approach employs the four elements used in combination to record time in Western Zhou bronze inscriptions: namely, the year, month, lunar-phase, and *ganzhi* 干支-day. Not all Western Zhou inscriptions with a date have all four parts, but we have a group of some seventy bronzes that actually have such full date notions. The basic method is first to use inscriptions with years recorded from a relatively short period, such as a royal reign, to determine the range of *ganzhi* distribution in each month that was divided by the four lunar phases in every year. The next step is to match this sequence with a calendar table provided by historical astronomers, such as that of Zhang Peiyu 張培瑜, with *ganzhi* numbers marked for the first day of every month projected back over the past 3,500 years in order to determine its actual position in historical chronology.[13] Meanwhile, the year numbers recorded on the bronzes can be used as basis to restore the length of royal reigns which in most cases are debated in traditional sources. This reconstructed calendar can then

12. See Shaughnessy, *Sources of Western Zhou History*, 116–20.

13. Zhang Peiyu 張培瑜, *Zhongguo xian Qin shi li biao* 中國先秦史曆表 (Jinan: Qi Lu shushe 齊魯書社, 1987).

https://doi.org/10.1017/S0362502800000316 Published online by Cambridge University Press

be used to date newly discovered inscriptions that have date-notations. In *Landscape and Power* I use the royal reigns suggested by Shaughnessy based on the "two first-year" theory proposed by Nivison (*LP*, xv, xvii); another system was recently published by the "Xia-Shang-Zhou Chronology Project."[14] But this latter system has proved problematic due to information provided by bronze inscriptions discovered since 2000.

In the past, there were many other systems of royal chronology such as those listed by Hsu and Linduff to which Khayutina refers.[15] However, not all of these old systems were based on calendrical calculation; even those which originally were based on *ganzhi* calculation have been made meaningless by the large number of new inscriptions that surfaced over the past thirty years. In general, it can be said that the calendrical method is promising, but the practical difficulties have so far seemed nearly insurmountable as no restored calendar that presumes a single "First-year" for every royal reign can successfully accommodate all Western Zhou inscriptions with complete date notations. On the other hand, the "Two First-year" theory, despite increasing the chances to match the inscriptions with the calendar calculated from either of the two first-years of a royal reign, and hence offering a better system to accommodate the fully dated inscriptions, has yet to explain: if a "Two First-year" calendar or calendars were actually in use during the Western Zhou, why, when recording a specific year-number in their inscriptions, did the Zhou elites fail to record which first-year their reign date was based upon; and how, without such records, they would not be confused themselves when the inscriptions were read later, as they were intended for such purpose. After all, a calendar consistently counting from the Zhou conquest down to 771 B.C.E. is itself a hypothesis as we cannot be sure that the Zhou had never calibrated their calendar, thus restarting the count of *ganzhi* days from the beginning or from a random number. Despite the difficulty in restoring a valid universal Western Zhou calendar as basis for dating inscriptions, it is nevertheless true that, in my opinion, if we are less ambitious and use the method to look at a relatively short period of time with its chronological framework guaranteed by at least some bronzes that are fully datable based on historical evidence, calendrical calculation can still significantly help us limit possibilities in dating practice.

14. Xia Shang Zhou duandai gongcheng zhuanjia zu 夏商周斷代工程專家組, *Xia Shang Zhou duandai gongcheng: 1996–2000 nian jieduan chengguo baogao* 夏商周斷代工程: 1996–2000 年階段成果報告 (Beijing: Shijie tushu 世界圖書, 2000), 88.

15. See Cho-yun Hsu and Katheryn Linduff, *Western Chou Civilization* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1986), 390, where Cheng Mengjia 陳夢家 and Shirakawa Shizuka's 白川靜 systems are listed for comparison. In the Chinese version of the book, Hsu actually tabulated more than fifteen such systems of dating royal reigns; see Xu Zhuoyun 許倬雲, *Xi Zhou shi* 西周史 (Beijing: Sanlian shusdian 三聯書店, 2001), 3.

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The art historical approach relies solely on the stylistic changes of bronzes and their ornamental patterns. Since such stylistic analysis was mostly conducted in a time when historical study of the inscriptions had already yielded a number of firm points of dating that were linked to particular royal reigns,[16] it is in fact not difficult to detect the general trends of evolution of bronze vessels over the course of the Western Zhou period. The issue is how to develop a system that can refine the presentation of stylistic trends. For instance, in the masterpiece produced by Hayashi Minao 林巳奈夫, the Western Zhou is divided into three large periods and each period is further divided into two sub-periods (Ia, Ib, IIa, IIb, IIIa, IIIb). Almost all images of bronzes known at that time have been placed in this system.[17] The work offers great convenience to scholars and students who wish to quickly find the typological position of particular bronzes that they come across. At the fundamental level, and true probably for most studies based solely on stylistic analysis, a bronze is placed at a specific position simply because it looks like it should be there according to a perceived developmental logic, but there is no *evidential ground* that can support its positioning. There are many questionable points in the book about whether a certain type should be placed chronologically before another type, but more often than not, the criteria Hayashi used to classify types leave people in serious doubt. Treating bronzes as individual pieces, Hayashi sometimes ignored the internal connections implicit in their inscriptions. A further challenge to this methodology is the practice of archaism in Western Zhou bronze industry which is no longer just a possibility but a reality.[18]

The archaeological approach starts from exactly the opposite end of the

16. For instance, by the early work of Guo Moruo 郭沫若, *Liang-Zhou jinwen ci daxi tulu kaoshi* 兩周金文辭大係圖錄考釋, 8 vols. (Beijing: Kexue chubanshe, 1958; first edition, Tokyo: Bunkyūdō, 1935), which is the foundation for much later refinement.

17. See Hayashi, Minao 林巳奈夫, *In Shū jidai seidōki no kenkyū* 殷周時代青銅器の研究, 2 vols. (Tokyo: Yoshikawa Kōbunkan, 1984).

18. On this issue, see the insightful discussion by Jessica Rawson in her recent studies which open a new dimension to the study of bronzes: "Novelties and Antiquarian Revival: The Case of the Chinese Bronzes," *Gugong xueshu jikan* 故宮學術集刊 22.1 (2004), 1–34, in which she identifies certain pieces from tomb no. 93 in Beizhao 北趙 and tomb 2006 in Sanmenxia 三門峽 as works of "recreation" produced during the late Western Zhou based on early Western Zhou styles; "Reviving Ancient Ornament and the Presence of the Past: Examples from Shang and Western Zhou Vessels," in *Reinventing the Past: Archaism and Antiquarianism in Chinese Art and Visual Culture*, ed. Wu Hung (Chicago: The Center for the Art of East Asia, University of Chicago, 2010), 47–76, in which she further discusses cases among late Shang bronzes from Anyang that were based on the earlier Erligang styles of ornament. In another paper she presented in the Institute of Archaeology, CASS (Beijing), in 2010, Rawson again identifies such bronzes among the new finds from Liangdaicun 梁帶村, Hancheng.

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art historical approach by treating bronzes as groups and relying essentially on the archaeological contexts in which the bronzes were found. The basic premise is that bronzes excavated from a single tomb (caches are different) were cast and used in roughly the same period during the Western Zhou, and therefore they can be analyzed in the same way that archaeologists analyze pottery groups. This methodology is possible only when scientifically excavated groups of bronzes have accumulated to a sufficient number that would allow us to detect regularities in the original burial sets. As demonstrated in my early studies,[19] these groups of vessels can be arranged in an evolutionary sequence, not because of the developmental logic of any single type, but because each set naturally includes multiple types from roughly the same period, arranged according to the general trend exhibited in multiple types. Because this analysis draws on information rooted in the original burial context, it has the advantage of considering two more factors: 1) the set itself, particularly the number of each type of vessel that formed the burial set, which can be analyzed to detect changes over time; and 2) not only the bronzes, but the pottery vessels found in the same tombs. This is the case because, through their co-occurrence in the burial contexts, the bronzes can be linked to a larger chronological sequence of pottery which is usually better understood in specific regions and which is often based on stratigraphical evidence in the field. The pottery can be analyzed to reconfirm the sequence of bronze sets. Stylistic analysis of individual types, though equally important, should come only at a later stage of the research and be presented as the result of the set-centered study. Finally the sequence of sets can be broken down into consecutive periods and linked as necessary to the royal chronology. The challenge to the archaeological approach is the occurrence of older bronzes sometimes in later tombs. However, given the increasing number of burial sets continuing to be found by archaeologists, regularities can be rechecked over and again to exclude possible earlier pieces. In short, the method is much more broadly based and evidentially supported than the simple stylistic analysis.

Above, I have discussed the advantages and disadvantages of four different approaches to the dating of Western Zhou bronzes and their inscriptions. Thanks to the complexity of the subject they study—the combination of text and object in the very body of the bronze—scholars of the Western Zhou period have had available to them the recourse to

19. See Li Feng 李峰, "Huanghe liuyu Xi-Zhou muzang chutu qingtong liqi de fenqi yu niandai" 黃河流域西周墓葬出土青銅禮器的分期與年代, *Kaogu xuebao* 考古學報 1988.4, 383–419; "Guo guo mudi tongqi qun de fenqi jiqi xiangguan wenti" 號國墓地銅器群的分期及其相關問題, *Kaogu* 考古 1988.11, 1035–43.

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methodological choices on top of an ever expanding source base. It is very important for us, whenever possible, to use all four methods in a correlative way to yield the most reliable and accurate dating of bronzes. In an ideal operation of dating, the unique part played by each method can be described as follows: The art historical and archaeological approaches can first help clarify the chronological period to which a bronze belongs; based upon the foundation of previous studies, it is now possible for us to differentiate an earlier phase from a later phase within each of the three large periods of the Western Zhou. Then, the archaeological approach can help us check further into the occurrences of the same type across different tombs and the types of bronzes that are commonly buried together with it to form a typological contextualization for its dating. Using this period as the time frame, we can then examine the internal evidence in its inscription to establish links with other datable bronzes as the prelude to dating it to a particular royal reign, a specific year, or particular day, as allowed by the information available. In cases where no direct link to a royal reign is possible, the historical and calendrical information can often help us place the bronze in the established networks of relationship that are linked to specific historical points. Certainly, this does not mean we have solved all chronological problems. Instead, there could well be a dispute about the dating of a bronze to a particular royal reign (in fact, we sometimes do better to date a bronze to either of adjacent two reigns to allow flexibility in the system). But such dating can always be argued for with respect to the bronze's relations to other bronzes. In *Landscape and Power*, the notes do not allow for full discussion of the basis of dating for all inscribed bronzes cited. However, I do offer a brief explanation of the most important clues for their dating. In cases where there is a dispute, and particularly if the dispute concerns the main analysis in the text, a fuller discussion of the date is given (for instance, *LP*, 131–32, n. 113).[20]

20. On the interpretation of the inscriptions in *Landscape and Power*, Khayutina and Chen Zhi raised a number of interesting points. For instance, Khayutina questions the identity of Huangfu 皇父 and suggests that Han Huangfu 函皇父 might have been the head of the Han 函 lineage residing far from Zhouyuan where the bronzes cast by him were found. This is certainly not impossibile, but I think that we still need to look at the issue in the larger context. Although "Huangfu" (August Father) was not a personal name, its use in the entire corpse of Western Zhou inscriptions is indeed very limited. But more importantly, I think the group of bronzes cast by Han Huangfu were not dowry vessels; instead, they are most likely cast by Huangfu for the lady Zhou Yun 琱娟 who married into the Han lineage. In other words, the Han lineage had a base in Zhouyuan where the bronzes were found, and the high number of bronzes included in the original set (11 *ding*, 8 *gui*, 2 *lei*, and 2 *hu*), reported in the inscription on the *pan*, suggests that Huangfu's social status was indeed very high. Therefore, there is still an undeniable ground to identify Han Huangfu with the prestigious Huangfu at the late Western Zhou court, as argued for by most previous scholars. Similarly, Chen Zhi raised

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The advantages and disadvantages of using transmitted texts pose a more complex problem that I have already discussed in considerable length in *Landscape and Power* (*LP*, 10–17). To restipulate, the most important thing in a study of the Western Zhou period using transmitted texts is to divide the textual information into sequential time layers, a methodology that the *Gushi bian* 古史辨 scholars taught us already seventy years ago. As clearly stated in the introduction, textual sources used to study Western Zhou history can be divided into three layers: 1) contemporaneous or nearly contemporaneous sources, e.g., the relevant chapters of the *Shang shu* 尚書 and certain poems in the *Shi jing* 詩經; 2) Warring States sources, most importantly the *Zhushu jinian* 竹書紀年 and the *Guo yu* 國語; and 3) Han dynasty sources, for instance, the *Shi ji* 史記. Han dynasty sources like the *Shi ji*, except for studies of Qin history, in the context of study of the Western Zhou are used only as "secondary sources showing a Han opinion" (*LP*, 17). Geographical sources composed during the Han period are different from this simply because they are concerned with historical sites that survived into Han times, and archaeological discoveries have already demonstrated their accuracy in most cases (*LP*, 21).

Information on the Zhou conquest period is mainly based on the *gao* 誥 "announcement" chapters in the *Shang shu* and the relevant poems in the *Shi jing*, and on respected modern studies of the relevant sources. Khayutina questions the legitimacy of using information in the *gao* chapters on the basis of a "recent critical attack" by Kai Vogelsang on the authenticity of the *gao* chapters as Western Zhou sources. However, Vogelsang's study of the *gao* chapters, particularly his comparison of their vocabulary with the language of Western Zhou bronze inscriptions, in my opinion, is marred by logical and methodological deficiencies which resulted in a misjudgment of the situation (see reasons below). As for the use of the "Beishan" 北山 poem to indicate a royal theory that "the Zhou king had sovereign right to all land and its population under Heaven," one needs to read further down the page. There it is made clear that my discussion amounts to a negation of this theory with respect to social reality, since the regional rulers received complete administrative rights and medi-

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the issue about Duke Wu and his relation to the Duoyou *ding* 多友鼎 (*Jicheng*, no. 2835). Again this has to be viewed in the larger context that I have clarified in note 113 on pages 131–32 that suggests that the Duoyou *ding* would be properly dated to the time of King Li, not King Xuan. As the content of the Duoyou *ding* is closely related to the Yu *ding* 禹鼎 (*Jicheng*, no. 2834), Wu *gui* 敔簋 (*Jicheng*, no. 4323), and the Shu Xiangfu Yu *gui* 叔向父禹簋 (*Jicheng*, no. 4242), they would be best considered as a groups with reference to the general social-political problems of the reign of King Li. As such, they do suggest that Duke Wu indeed had extraordinary power.

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ated the authority of the Zhou king. However, as further discussed in *Bureaucracy and the State* (*BS*, 98), considering newly discovered inscriptions, the Zhou king made frequent decisions concerning the whole of the Western Zhou state and responded to crises that occurred in regions far beyond the royal domain. This suggests that the Zhou king might have indeed embraced such a political idealism, and if it were ever used as a political rhetoric, then there is no reason why it could not have been used in such way already during the Western Zhou.

It is certainly justified, for the reasons I have already outlined in the introduction (*LP*, 15), to question the value of post-Western Zhou sources for the study of Western Zhou history, but it is ultimately wrong if one thinks that our research should simply end with such questions. The post-Western Zhou sources have problems of distortion and even fabrication of information that reflect the agendas of later generations. The problem is well known and even graduate students with a basic training in historiography would have no difficulty in discerning some of the fabrications in such late texts. But the real question here is: what can or will we do about it? As I noted in the introduction, even the contemporaneous sources from the Western Zhou such as the *gao* chapters in the *Shang shu* are subject to changes at the hands of late editors, resulting in the intrusion of later grammatical features. Such is the nature of textual transmission, and this alone cannot constitute solid grounds for dating the *original composition* of the text to the later time period, just as we cannot use editorial changes to judge the date and quality of a scholarly work today. On the other hand, even sources originally composed in the later historical periods may still contain bits of valuable genuine information that had passed down from the Western Zhou period, a fact that is hard for anyone to deny.

This situation poses a major challenge to the historical study of ancient China using transmitted sources, a dilemma that the *Gushi bian* scholars were fully aware of but simply could not overcome given the limits of the methodology available to them through their skilled analysis of textual history to determine the date of the texts. But the date of the composition of a text could be significantly different from the date of the information it contains, given the reasons mentioned above. Unfortunately the *Gushi bian* agenda still constitutes the conceptual framework for some scholars who are intellectually satisfied by merely casting doubts on the received sources. The problem is certainly not limited to the study of the Western Zhou, or even to the study of ancient China in general. But every responsible scholar of ancient China must take his or her stand on whether to stop here at lamenting the inaccuracy of sources and risk slipping into the hopeless condition of intellectual nihilism, or to strive

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to achieve at least a bit of solid understanding of what actually happened in the ancient past using the valuable information offered by these texts. Skepticism can offer us a healthy start in research, but it should never be the ultimate goal of historical scholarship.

As far as the study of Western Zhou history is concerned, I think that we have a few strategies that can help us overcome the challenges posed by transmitted sources and hence move the field forward. First, the unique social condition of pre-imperial China—a world divided by multiple regional cultures—offers us the possibility of comparison of particularly historical texts produced and transmitted independently in regional contexts. This situation is very different from the historical context in which texts were transmitted or distributed in the imperial Han or Tang dynasties. If two or three sources without demonstrable history of textual derivation from one another agree on a certain historical development, we must seriously consider the possibility that they were based on an earlier common tradition passed down possibly from the contemporary Western Zhou period. This point has already been discussed in the introduction with respect to the *Bamboo Annals* and the *Guo yu* (*LP*, 16–17). But more importantly, they should not be used alone or as the first sources to be used. Instead, in the study of a particular historical event or process, the contemporaneous bronze inscriptions first and foremost provide us with a number of solid points that can support an outline narrative, and the textual sources should be used in relation to the inscriptions and to bridge the gaps left by the inscriptions. At the fundamental level, the archaeological discoveries have already sufficiently clarified the cultural infrastructure of the Western Zhou state and its numerous regional components. Particularly the scientific archaeological excavation of inscribed bronzes enables us to reconstruct geographical contexts linked to the historical process acquired from the study of inscriptions and the relevant textual records. This multilayered and multi-dimensional knowledge base for Western Zhou history gives us a surer ground to exercise the historian's best judgment to fully explore the significance of the particular transmitted textual records. On the basis of impartial consideration of all sources, archaeological, paleographical, and textual, we can acquire some solid ground in our understanding of Western Zhou history. If *Landscape and Power* has achieved something, it was this little piece of solid ground it was able to contribute to the field of early China studies. I am most honored that all reviewers of the book consider that this interdisciplinary approach, considering the full range of evidence, is indeed a helpful one, and that the book in this regard is a success, not a failure.

May 6, 2011, Forest Hills, New York

https://doi.org/10.1017/S0362502800000316 Published online by Cambridge University Press