

REVIEW FORUM

Li Feng, *Landscape and Power in Early China: The Crisis and Fall of the Western Zhou, 1045–771 BC*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2006. 405 pp.

Discussion by Maria Khayutina, Yuri Pines, Katheryn M. Linduff, Constance A. Cook, and Chen Zhi

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How was the first large-scale centralizing project in China, the Zhou conquest polity, laid out in the physical-geographical space? How did the Zhou kings managed to control political entities in the far east detached from the royal centres in Wei River Valley by many hundreds of kilometres, and why was their authority ended roughly a hundred kilometres to the west and the north from the Zhou metropolitan area? Why were the ill-famed Rong “barbarians” able to smash the power of the Zhou in the west in 771 B.C.E.? When, why and how did the west-east migration of Zhou aristocratic lineages, which, indeed, became one of the main catalysts of the ceaseless warfare of the following centuries, begin? Based on a wide range of sources, including traditionally transmitted- texts from the Zhou and Han periods, Western Zhou bronze inscriptions, archaeological data, as well as results of ongoing sinological historical scholarship, Li Feng’s first book sheds light on many aspects of the history of the Early China, some of which have been treated rather superficially in earlier general histories of the Western Zhou period published in the west.¹

This is indeed not just the accumulation of new archaeological and epigraphic evidence during the past decades, but a distinctive approach that makes possible an investigation of how political power in China was configured by and how it reconfigured its *landscape*. Opening up this new perspective on the Western Zhou history represents one of the

1. Cf. Herrlee Glessner Creel, *The Origins of Statecraft in China: Volume 1: The Western Chou Empire* (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1970); Hsu Cho-yun and Katheryn M. Linduff, *Western Chou Civilization* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1988).

main contributions of the author to the field of Early China studies.²

At the same time, *Landscape and Power* is not a historical-geographical, but a historical work in which geography is consistently considered as a factor in the historical process. Li Feng understands landscape as the "system of arrangement" for natural and anthropogenous factors entailing "a reciprocal relationship between human society and its environment that mutually influence each other" (18). From this standpoint, he leads Zhou studies towards the "spatial turn" that "has unfolded across the social sciences and humanities"³ since the end of the 1980s, but which still represents a new trend in sinological scholarship on antiquity.⁴ The adherents of this movement across various scholarly fields assume that "geography matters, not for the simplistic and overly used reason that everything happens in space, but because *where* things happen is critical to knowing *how* and *why* they happen."⁵ Consonant with this perception, Li Feng pin-points Western Zhou place-names and events on a modern map in order to reveal reasons, circumstances and consequences of human struggles for economic resources and political power. Accordingly, his maps, constructed using the GIS-software ESRI and "Harvard China Historical GIS dataset," displaying not only rivers and sites (as maps in most other historical books on China do), but also features of relief, are not just illustrations, but tools of analysis and parts of the argument.

Guided by his "spatial" approach, the author has been able to make the following important observations contributing to our understanding of Western Zhou history. As he points out, Zhou (especially, Ji

2. It should be noted that historical geography is a flourishing scholarly field in China, which is very little known to non-specialist western readers. The author not only acquaints us with the Chinese historical-geographical discourse, but brings together historical geography and systematic, theoretically oriented historical research, which can be appreciated by Chinese readers as well (cf. review of the Chinese translation of *Landscape and Power* by Xu Feng 徐峰, "Ping Xi Zhou de miewang: Zhongguo zaoqi guojia de dili he zhengzhi weiji" 評《西周的滅亡：中國早期國家的地理和政治危機》，*Kaogu* 2010.1, 90-96).

3. Cf. Warf, Barney, and Santa Arias, "Introduction: The reinsertion of space into the social sciences and humanities," in *The Spatial Turn: Interdisciplinary Perspectives*, ed. by Barney Warf and Santa Arias (New York: Routledge, 2009), 1-10, esp. 2.

4. For other recent publications with distinct "spatial perspective" cf. Di Cosmo, Nicola, *Ancient China and Its Enemies: The Rise of Nomadic Power in East Asian History* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2002); Lewis, Mark Edward, *The Construction of Space in Early China* (Albany: SUNY, 2006).

5. Cf. *The Spatial Turn*, 2. As the bibliographical index makes clear, Li Feng assumed his perspective not under the influence of western spatial turn theorists, such as Foucault, Cosgrove, or Soja, but rather through his experiences as field archaeologist and attentive observer.

姬-surnamed) regional states were established in the east “in positions that could effectively control the roads” and in “agriculturally most favourable areas in the transitional belt between the mountains and the alluvial plain” (89), whereas the plains could be easily inundated and, hence, were less attractive for settlement. He argues that their establishment was not just as “a random process to give out the land to royal kinsmen and the various local leaders,” but a “process through which the Western Zhou state carefully constructed its geographical space, hence strengthening its political foundation” (89), which appears plausible. Based on the analysis of pottery, he argues that, decades after the Zhou conquest, a west-east division “remained very significant at the non-elite level of Western Zhou culture” (81). However, during the middle and late Western Zhou periods, the east, including central Henan and Hebei, became largely integrated with the west (82). At the same time, during the late Western Zhou period, peripheral regions of the “far east”, like Qi 齊 and Lu 魯 in Shandong, “drifted away” from the Zhou center, as manifested in the regionalization of their material culture both on non-elite and elite levels (119). Regarding this as a reflection of the political “drifting away,” Li Feng argues that the system of control over regional states in the east through kinship structure could not remain effective over time (116), which seems debatable.⁶ Identifying signs of disorder in relationships between the royal house and regional states in the east and interpreting them as one factor of decline of the Western Zhou “state,” he deems the “continuing grant of landed properties” to metropolitan aristocracy, documented by a selection of translated bronze inscriptions (127–134), as another factor weakening royal power, which is in agreement with earlier scholarship.⁷

Studying the relationships between the metropolitan Zhou and peoples of the north, Li Feng points out that the Zhou maintained peaceful relationships with their immediate neighbours in that area, for instance, with

6. Creel hesitated whether the role of kinship in the Zhou society had not been “exaggerated” (*Origins of Statecraft*, 381). In contrast, Hsu and Linduff validate the importance of kinship in early Chinese politics (*Western Chou Civilization*, 171). In his next book, Li Feng reviews his position and attaches more organizing efficiency to the kinship, defining the Western Zhou as “delegatory kin-ordered settlement state” (cf. *Bureaucracy and the State* [Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008], 294–98). It seems also not obvious that the regionalization of the material culture necessarily reflects decentralizing political trends. The fact that Qi and Lu remained basically loyal to the royal court also during the Spring and Autumn period points rather to the contrary.

7. Cf. Hsu and Linduff, *Western Chou Civilization*, 279. On this place, readers can be advised to consider the fundamental investigation into the distribution and exchange of landed property during the Western Zhou period based on bronze inscriptions: Ulrich Lau, *Quellenstudien zur Landvergabe und Bodenübertragung in der westlichen Zhou-Dynastie (1045?-771 v.Chr.)* (Sankt Augustin: Monumenta Serica 1999).

peoples that created the Siwa 寺洼 culture in southern Gansu and Shaanxi (176–79).⁸ He assumes that the Xianyun 獯豸, the main northern enemies of the Zhou, belonged to the group of peoples that had been referred to as “Western Rong” 西戎 in other texts (143–44).⁹ They represented “one of the societies that shared the ‘Northern Zone’ tradition,” and, possibly, were “cultural heirs to the Bronze Age civilization of Ordos that was once prosperous during the Shang” (188, 144).¹⁰ Importantly, he underlines that the Xianyun were not mounted nomads, but fought from chariots in the same way as the Zhou (144).¹¹ Based on the *Duo You ding* 多友鼎 inscription, that he attributes to the reign of King Li 厲 (147), the author localizes the war between the Zhou and the Xianyun in the upper Jing 涇 River region in Shaanxi province and visualizes its stages on a map (map 10 on 170).¹² Thus, he makes clear that the control over the Jing River valley was crucial to the security of the Zhou metropolitan area.¹³

Reconstructing the political and geographical contexts of the fall of the Western Zhou royal court in 771 B.C.E., the author suggests that the Shen 申, or Western Shen 西申, state was also just in the upper Jing River region (227; map 12 on 222).¹⁴ This allows him to offer an explanation of how the ruler of Shen 申, the father of the Zhou queen divorced by King You 幽, was able to cast an alliance with Western Rong people, who, finally, invaded the metropolitan area and killed the king (232).¹⁵

Discussing the circumstances of King Ping 平's withdrawal of the royal

8. South is given less attention in *Landscape and Power*, but, as the book does not pretend to be a “general history,” the focus on one direction of Western Zhou external politics is justified.

9. This agrees with Shaughnessy, “Western Zhou History,” 350.

10. It remains unclear on which evidence the latter argument is based.

11. In some earlier studies, Xianyun were regarded as nomads (cf. *Western Zhou Civilization*, 259).

12. Some scholars date *Duo You ding* to King Xuan's reign (e. g. Shaughnessy, Edward L., “The Date of the ‘Duo You Ding’ and its Significance,” *Early China* 9–10 (1983–85), 55–69). In the latter paper, Shaughnessy reconstructs the geography of the war and identifies locations mentioned in the *Duo You ding* in Jing River valley, even providing a map. Li Feng's suggestions about the proceeding of the war are in some points different from Shaughnessy's. Still, it is surprising that the author of *Landscape and Power* considers only Shaughnessy's dating suggestions (130), but not his historical-geographical analysis.

13. Localisation of place names mentioned in the *Duo you ding* was a matter of hot debate in early 1980s. *Landscape and Power* supports identifications made by Li Zhongcao 李仲操, “Ye shi Duo You ding ming wen,” *Renwen zazhi* 1982.6, 95–99, and Liu Xiang 劉翔, “Duo You ding ming liang yi” 多友鼎銘兩議, *Renwen zazhi* 1983.1, 82–85.

14. The author is aware of the problem of using the *Shan Hai jing* 山海經 as a source for geographic identifications (227–28).

15. If this localization is true, King You's political incompetence appears beyond all comprehension.

seat from Shaanxi to Henan, the author challenges the general view that it was the presence of the Rong invaders that made the continued presence of the Zhou capitals in Wei Valley impossible. He points out that the old Zhou metropolitan area fell under the control of the King of Xie 攜, a younger son of King You and Bao Si 褒姒, who was enthroned in this yet-to-be-identified place by the influential lineage of Guo 虢 (242–45). This period of succession struggles has been so far overlooked by western scholars of the Western Zhou. Bringing it to our attention enhances our understanding of the complexity of early Chinese politics.¹⁶ Finally, the author sheds light on the process of the eastward migration of lineages, or states, which has been thematized, but never discussed in detail in western Sinological literature.¹⁷ The analysis of the circumstances of the relocation of two major Ji-surnamed lineages, Guo and Zheng 鄭, to new territories in Henan, and of the Ying 嬴-surnamed Qin 秦 lineage to the former metropolitan region of the Zhou, is another significant achievement of *Landscape and Power*.

Landscape and Power is an investigation conducted on the interface of several disciplines: text-based historical research, historical geography, archaeology and epigraphic studies. Li Feng views epigraphy as an indispensable “source of the Western Zhou history” in its many facets.¹⁸ The book includes a number of full transcriptions of epigraphic texts, translated into English with great accuracy and offering valuable

16. For bringing up this issue for the first time cf. Chao Fulin 晁福林, “Lun Ping wang dongqian” 論平王東遷, *Lishi yanjiu* 1991.6, 8–23 (the name of the author is misspelled as Chao Fucun 晁福村 in the bibliography on p. 357).

17. In particular, Hsu and Linduff provide a sub-chapter “Movement of Chou States,” based on Chen Pan 陳槃 *Chunqiu dashibiao lieguo juexing ji cunmiebiao yhuanyi* 春秋大事表列國爵姓及存滅表讓異 (Taipei: Academia Sinica, 1969) (cf. *Western Zhou Civilization*, 158–63). There, they simply list the states that moved, leaving the reader wondering how this could be done in practice.

18. Their value as such has been stressed by Edward Shaughnessy in his *Sources of Western Zhou History: Inscribed Bronze Vessels* (Berkeley: California University Press, 1991), thus validating the approach assumed earlier by Wang Guowei, Guo Moruo, Kaizuka Shigeki, Bernhard Karlgren and Herlee Creel. In contrast, Lothar von Falkenhausen has called for treating “inscriptions as essentially religious documents” (cf. “Issues in Western Zhou Studies.” Review article on *Sources on Western Zhou History*, by Edward L. Shaughnessy, and *Western Zhou Ritual Bronzes from the Arthur M. Sackler Collections*, by Jessica Rawson. *Early China* 18 [1993]: 139–226). A large number of studies based on bronze inscriptions and dedicated to a wide range of historical questions published during the last decades leave no doubt that bronze inscriptions can be used as historical sources in many ways, although their appropriateness has to be discussed for every particular investigation. Cf. e.g. Shaughnessy, Edward L., “Western Zhou History” in *The Cambridge History of Ancient China: From the Origins of Civilization to 221 BC*, edited by Michael Loewe and Edward L. Shaughnessy (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 292–351.

insights into the circumstances of the Western Zhou reality, its thought, and language. In general, epigraphic data are handled with care. Necessary bibliographical references allowing the reader to locate the sources and to verify the author's statements are provided.¹⁹ At the end of the book, an alphabetic index of all inscriptions used in the study (397–79) is appended. Both the way of referring and the introduction of an index represent improvements in comparison to the presentation of epigraphical sources in earlier books.²⁰ The dating of inscriptions is systematic, carefully weighed, and, as a rule, adequate. However, the general problem of dating of bronze inscriptions has not been raised as a topic in the introduction while discussing the scope of their applicability, which represents a regretful omission. As far as the problem of inscriptions' dating is related to the general debate about the chronology of the Western Zhou reigns, the lack of information about alternative chronological systems obscures the discussion for non-initiated readers.²¹ It should be also noted that, in some cases, arguments based on the interpretation of inscriptions need better substantiations,²² whereas identification of persons referred to in inscriptions and in transmitted texts is not always unambiguous.²³

19. These include the inscription's title in transcription and in standard or reconstructed characters, its number according to the *Yin Zhou jinwen jicheng* 殷周金文集成, and, when possible, information about the place of its discovery. Inscriptions not included in the *Jicheng* are referenced separately.

20. Cf. *Origins of Statecraft* and *Western Chou Civilization*. Still, some further improvements can be suggested, e.g. tabulation of inscriptions according to their period together with information about their provenience, and, if applicable, about their attribution to a particular reign, in an appendix.

21. Although the author states that different chronologies exist (xv), having chosen Nivison-Shaughnessy's scheme (xvii), he does not inform us about the scope of discrepancies between various systems. For a model of how to make these discrepancies transparent cf. *Western Chou Civilization* (387–90).

22. Li Feng localizes the state of Guai 乖, appearing in the *Guai-bo gui* 乖伯簋 with unknown provenience, in upper Jing River (185) based on the *Guai-shu ding* 乖叔鼎 (*Jicheng* #1733; the *Jicheng* number is missing in the text) found in a tomb in Gansu province, Lingtai County, Yaojiahe 甘肅靈臺姚家河. Li Feng thus (reasonably) challenges the earlier localization of Guai in the Yangzi River Valley in Zigui 秭歸 County of Hubei province, suggested by Guo Moruo (185 n. 121). However, considering that bronzes were often exchanged between lineages, localizing a lineage's residence based on a single inscription (especially, in absence of relevant references in delivered texts) is methodologically problematic. Other considerations can be raised both against and in favour of Li Feng's hypothesis, and, therefore a more substantial weighing of pros and cons would be appropriate in such cases.

23. The author identifies Huangfu *qingshi* 皇父卿士 ("Prime Minister" in Li Feng's terms) mentioned in the "Shiyue zhi jiao" 十月之交 Ode of the *Shi jing* with Han Huangfu 函皇父, the commissioner of bronzes for Lady Yun of Diao 琯嬭 discovered in Kangjia 康家 in Fufeng County of Shaanxi Province, i. e. on the "Plain of Zhou."

Transmitted literature, dating mostly from post-Western Zhou periods, represents another main source of *Landscape and Power*. Texts used for localization of places are usually treated with due criticism.²⁴ In the investigation of the evolution of the legend about Bao Si 褒姒 (199–202), historical background and various ideological layers are carefully separated from one another. However, whereas the “Small Odes” of the *Shi jing* are suitable for the illustration of the desperateness of the Zhou elites on the eve and right after the turmoil of 771 B.C.E. (205–15, 237–41), it remains questionable whether later texts are able to reflect the political conceptions current around the time of the Zhou conquest in mid-eleventh century B.C.E.²⁵ In particular, the author restates that “in theory, as proclaimed by the poem ‘Beishan’ 北山 (no. 205) in the *Book of Poetry*, the Zhou King had the sovereign right to all land and its population under Heaven” (115). “Beishan” has been treated with undue credence by many scholars, who sometimes read it as a legal document.²⁶ But, obviously, judging by its literary features alone, this text could not have been composed before the ninth century B.C.E., and, judging upon its content, it was, most likely written during the Eastern Zhou period by court literati in the vain hope of restoring the prestige of the declining royal house. Not being contemporary with the foundation of the Western Zhou state, does it actually reflect what Zhou kings had in mind while establishing their political network?

Li Feng bases this identification on his assumption of exclusiveness of the title *huang* (“August” in his terms) (204). However, e. g. *Xin-shu huangfu gui* 辛叔皇父簋 (*Jicheng* #3859), made by the head of a collateral branch of Xin lineage, demonstrates that “August” or “Grand Father” was not such an uncommon title during the Late Western Zhou. Characteristically, the spouse of the head of another collateral branch of the same lineage was referred to as *Xin-zhong Ji huangmu* 辛仲姬皇母, “Grand Mother Lady Ji, [spouse of] *Xin-zhong*” (*Xin-zhong Ji huangmu ding* 辛仲姬皇母鼎, *Jicheng* #2582, Late Western Zhou). Similarly, Han Huangfu was the head of Han lineage, possibly, residing far from the Plain of Zhou, and not necessarily involved in the Zhou government.

24. Still, it is not certain, whether Taiyuan 太原 referred to in the *Bamboo Annals* in connection with King Mu 穆’s campaign against the Quanrong 犬戎, is the same place as Taiyuan, referred to in the “Liu yue” 六月 ode of the *Shi jing* (145). The *Bamboo Annals* 竹書紀年 is a Warring States period text, found in one tomb together with the *Mu Tianzi zhuan* 穆天子傳, rendering the story about King Mu’s travels. According to the later source, very likely consulted by the author of the *Bamboo Annals*, King Mu moved to the north through Taihang Mountains in Shanxi province and attacked Quanrong in the upper flow of Hutuo 虎沱 River. This was the area to the north of Taiyuan, as a place in upper Fen 汾 River Valley was already called during the Warring States period.

25. For a recent critical attack on the “sancta sanctorum” of the Western Zhou sources, the “earliest” chapters of the *Shang shu*, cf. Kai Vogelsang, “Inscriptions and Proclamations: On the Authenticity of the ‘gao’ Chapters in the *Book of Documents*,” *BMFEA* 74 (2002): 138–209.

26. Cf. e.g. Lau, *Quellenstudien*, 391.

Making some challenging observations, already mentioned above, about particular events and circumstances, in general, *Landscape and Power* supports the traditional perspective on Zhou history. Accordingly, after the conquest of Shang and the "politically most accomplished period" of the "Cheng-Kang peace," the Western Zhou polity entered "a long process of gradual decline" (91). Indeed, if, as Warring States' and later periods' texts transmit, the Zhou kings planned to "unify the All-under-Heaven," i.e., in our etic terms, to create a centralized territorial state, they can be regarded as "quite incompetent" (91), because the establishment of hereditary "regional states" was clearly a decentralizing factor. But what was actually the goal of the Zhou, as they conducted their conquest campaigns: to bring the largest possible territory under the power of one single descent line of the Zhou lineage, or to facilitate prosperity of the largest possible number of its descent lines? If the former was the case, the post-conquest development can be deemed "decline." In the second case, it can be regarded as "progress." If the heterogeneous cultural and, possibly, ethnic space of Early China had irreparably split in pieces right after 771 B.C.E., then the Zhou project could be estimated as "failed." But, if, despite the ceaseless armed quarrels between lineages or states, they continued to cooperate and homogenize themselves during the Spring and Autumn period, wouldn't the outcome of this project be better characterized as a "success"? In any case, even while overdramatizing the collapse of the Western Zhou world order, Li Feng's book invites further discussion, which can be regarded as a scholarly contribution in its own right.

Although the space does not permit for a more detailed discussion, several points should be noted for which clarifications would be desirable. First, Li Feng uses the term "state" to refer both to the "Western Zhou state" and "regional states" regarding the latter as "replicas" of the former (2). The book would have benefited from a more theoretical touch while operating with the concept of "state."²⁷ Second, reviewing the distribution of Western Zhou sites in Shaanxi, the author stresses the "paramount importance" of Feng and Hao, identified with Zongzhou, in Feng River Valley as the "pivot of the political and administrative system of the Western Zhou state" (46, 45). Regarding another, in fact, much more representative concentration of Zhou archaeological remains on the "Plain of Zhou," Li Feng acknowledges that "this site continued to be an important base of royal power and aristocratic activities, paralleling the capitals Feng and Hao" (47), but, complying with traditional historiography, he hesitates to recognize it as the third, full-fledged "capital" of

27. Li Feng offers a theoretical discussion about the state in his second book, *Bureaucracy and the State*, which is not subject of the present review.

the Zhou kings. I believe that, by doing so, he would have been able to provide a more adequate reconstruction of the “Western Zhou geopolitical axis” connecting the centres in Shaanxi with the eastern center Luoyi/Chengzhou in Henan. Third, the role of Luoyi during the late Western Zhou period seems not to be sufficiently explored. It is worthy of consideration whether the move of the court to the east was not planned in advance during the late Western Zhou reigns, whereas the upheaval of Shen and Western Rong only accelerated, but did not really caused the relocation. Fourth, it would be reasonable to reflect on the functions and significance of “capitals” in the Zhou political system. This would help to estimate the losses, or, perhaps, also advantages from the withdrawal of the court from the west. Taking into consideration the frequent movement of Zhou kings between their main seats in Zongzhou, Zhou, and Chengzhou, as well as to some secondary residences, witnessed in dozens of bronze inscriptions, also is necessary for understanding the relationships between power and physical geography.²⁸

In sum, *Landscape and Power* undoubtedly represents a major event in the field of Early China studies. Although it is not intended as “a general history of the Western Zhou period, or even a general history of the late Western Zhou” (5), it is comparable by its size (405 pages), informational wealth, and scope of considered topics with both Creel’s *Origins of Statecraft* (1972, 559 pages) and Hsu and Linduff’s *Western Chou Civilization* (1988, 421 pages). Its Chapter I and Appendix I, counting together 107 pages, offer the most detailed overview of Western Zhou archaeology available in English by the date of publication,²⁹ and, therefore, are suitable for reference and teaching purposes.³⁰ It can be

28. For a discussion about functions of capitals reflected by bronze inscriptions and about related historical memories in post-Western Zhou literature cf. Maria Khayutina, “Royal Hospitality and Geopolitical Constitution of the Western Zhou Polity (1046/5-771 BC),” *T’oung Pao* 96/1-3 (2010), 1-73; Maria Khayutina, “Western ‘capitals’ of the Western Zhou dynasty (1046/5-771 BC): historical reality and its reflections until the time of Sima Qian,” *Oriens Extremus* 47 (2008), 25-65.

29. Compare with Rawson, Jessica, “Western Zhou Archaeology,” in *The Cambridge History of Ancient China, 352-449* (97 pages). Lothar von Falkenhausen’s *Chinese Society in the Age of Confucius (1000-250 BC). The Archaeological Evidence* (Los Angeles: Cotsen Institute of Archaeology, University of Los Angeles, 2006; 555 pages), published simultaneously with *Landscape and Power*, covers the whole Zhou period from early Western Zhou until the Warring states period. However, it does not include a general review of archaeological finds by period, but is organized around a set of particular problems.

30. Regrettably, *Landscape and Power* seldom enters a dialogue with these standard works, serving as orientation for non-specialist readers and students. For example, it often discusses complexes and individual finds that have been already considered, but, in some cases, differently interpreted in *Western Chou Civilization* or in “Western Zhou Archaeology” (compare, e. g. the discussion of the archaeology of Yan state in

recommended for students already at the undergraduate level alongside with the abovementioned standard works. Being the first book-size problem-oriented investigation specifically into Western Zhou history, it should be considered by specialists working on Early China, and is also worth of attention of scholars interested in historical geography, military history, and migration. The readers can also be advised to consider Li Feng's second book, *Bureaucracy and State*, which develops some positions of the author that have been anticipated in *Landscape and Power*.

To conclude with the book's formal criteria, several features of its format can be particularly appreciated: a) the introduction of Chinese characters at the first appearance of place-names or terms, b) full transcriptions and translations of inscriptions, c) usage of pinyin transliteration, d) footnotes instead of endnotes, e) large number of images,³¹ and f) large number of maps.³²

I am looking forward to reading Li Feng's further new publications and wish him inspiration for his continued research.

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Two features of *Landscape and Power in Early China* mark it as an exemplary study. First is the author's masterful integration of material, paleographic and textual sources, which allows him to reconstruct aspects of Western Zhou history in an incomparably richer and more comprehensive way than had been done heretofore. Second, and most substantially, Li Feng's introduction of the geographical factors behind the military, administrative and economic dynamics of the Zhou age, based as it is on the author's intimate knowledge of the landscape of the Wei River valley and adjacent areas, introduces a new level of analysis, which will hereafter be essential to any comparable study of early—and not just early—China's history. Thus, while colleagues may disagree with some of Li's analyses, quibble with his interpretations, or dismiss some of his

Western Chou Civilization (194–201), in "Western Zhou Archaeology" (409–13), and in *Landscape and Power*, 335–41). This reproach, however, should not be addressed to Li Feng alone. Jessica Rawson completely ignores Hsu and Linduff's book in her chapter in the *Cambridge History of Ancient China*. In contrast, the latter authors repeatedly reflect on Creel's *Origins of Statecraft*, undoubtedly, helping the reader to follow the thread and to distinguish, what is new, and what is different. It can be suggested that works available to a general western audience would be referred to more regularly for sake of greater transparency and intelligibility of the new scholarship.

31. In few cases, legends do not specify represented objects by type, so that they do not help a non-specialist to distinguish things referred to in the text which this picture is supposed to complement (e. g. Fig. 21 on 120).

32. *Landscape and Power* includes nineteen maps. For comparison, there are only five maps in *Western Chou Civilization*, and only two in *The Origins of Statecraft*.

conclusions as too speculative—the overall standing of *Landscape and Power* as a scholarly masterpiece is undeniable.

My admiration of *Landscape and Power* aside, in this review I shall focus on a few points of disagreement with the author; I hope that these polemical remarks will encourage discussion on points of common interest. Most specifically, I think that Li Feng has gone too far in the direction of considering the Zhou rule as a purely military and administrative phenomenon. While the author's willingness to dissociate himself from earlier publications which often reduced the Zhou power to a skillful manipulation of religious and ideological constructs, viz. the notion of Heaven's Decree (or Mandate, *Tian ming* 天命), is understandable and laudable, the resultant neglect of religious aspects of Zhou rule impoverishes his discussion. To be sure, the importance of military and administrative devices developed by the Zhou leaders is undeniable; yet it is impossible to understand the survivability of the dynasty without taking into full consideration the effectiveness of the legitimating means employed by its architects.

To recapitulate, the Zhou kings enjoyed not just economic, military and to a lesser extent administrative superiority over their subjects, but also possessed undisputable spiritual authority. In their double capacity as "Sons of Heaven" and heads of the ruling Ji 姬 clan, they had preferential access to the supreme deity, Heaven, and to the deified ancestors, and mediated between the Powers above and the humankind below. These exclusive pontifical powers of the monarchs which had clear antecedents in the preceding Shang dynasty, became an exceptionally important asset of the royal house. They survived the vicissitudes of history, and remained intact until the very end of the Zhou rule, and possibly even after the final demise of the Zhou dynasty.³³ In my eyes, it is this peculiar role of the Zhou kings at the apex of a religious and not just sociopolitical pyramid, which explains the dynasty's unparalleled longevity long after it lost its military, economic and administrative prowess.

Let us focus briefly on the political implications of the Zhou kings' religious superiority. First, it is most notable that, throughout eight centuries, the Zhou kings preserved their exclusive appellation as "Sons of Heaven" (*tianzi* 天子). While leaders of non-Zhou polities at times declared themselves "kings" (*wang* 王), they never called themselves "Sons

33. One of the most interesting examples of this lasting respect for the Zhou kings' position at the apex of the religious pyramid is the jade tablet inscription with a prayer to Mt Hua 華山, produced in all likelihood by one of the Qin 秦 rulers shortly after the demise of the Zhou house in 256 B.C.E. See details in Yuri Pines, "The Question of Interpretation: Qin History in Light of New Epigraphic Sources," *Early China* 29 (2004), 1-44 on pp. 4-13.

of Heaven," recognizing thereby the ongoing Zhou superiority, at least in religious terms.³⁴ Second, the Zhou kings enjoyed a kind of political immunity: while their rule was repeatedly defied either by external foes or by their nominal subordinates, the regional lords, not a single leader throughout the Western Zhou period and much beyond dared proclaiming his intention to *replace* the Zhou dynasty. Indeed, despite the well documented insistence of the Zhou ideologues on the transferability of Heaven's Decree,³⁵ their dynasty remained singularly unchallenged throughout the centuries of its rule. The reasons behind this surprising deference to the Zhou are complex, to be sure, but it is highly likely that it was at least partly motivated by the dynasty's religious supremacy. This supremacy may explain why the Zhou survived, albeit in a crippled form, the disastrous crisis of 771 B.C.E. It is regrettable that Li Feng has omitted this dimension from his masterful narration of that crisis.

Aside from direct political implications, the religious potency of the royal house had contributed toward its cultural prestige, which also could become a politically meaningful asset. The utilization of the dynasty's cultural leadership in the sociopolitical sphere is most clearly observable in the promulgation of the Late Western Zhou ritual reform, perhaps the single most significant development of the late years of the Western Zhou. Li Feng mentions this reform only *en passant*, addressing it primarily in the context of the Eastern Zhou developments (pp. 293–96 and p. 102n.34).³⁶ This muted discussion is puzzling: I believe that the Reform should have been discussed in much greater detail, as its relevance to the author's analysis of the Late Western Zhou sociopolitical situation is undeniable. The Reform's importance in this context is twofold: first, it indicates the ongoing ability of the royal center to spearhead far-reaching ritual (and *mutatis mutandis* social and religious) innovations even at the time of its progressive weakening; and second, because of the Reform's obvious contribution to bolstering the authority of the royal house. By fixing sumptuary distinctions among different groups of hereditary

34. An excellent example of this peculiarity is the *Guai Bo-gui* 乖伯鬻 inscription, discussed by Li Feng on pp. 183–85; the donor names his father "king" but refers to the Zhou monarch as "Son of Heaven." Noteworthy, even in the Warring States period none of the self-appointed regional "kings" dared proclaim himself Son of Heaven (for a single exception, see *Zhanguo ce zhushi* 戰國策注釋, annotated by He Jianzhang 何建章 [Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1991], 20.13 ["Zhao ce" 趙策 3], 737).

35. The fear of the potential loss of the Mandate is evident in many supposedly early Western Zhou texts, such as "Kang gao" 康誥 and "Duo fang" 多方 documents or the "Wen Wang" 文王 ode.

36. For the most systematic discussion of the Late Western Zhou ritual reform, see Lothar von Falkenhausen, *Chinese Society in the Age of Confucius (1050–250 BC): The Archeological Evidence* (Los Angeles: Cotsen Institute of Archaeology at UCLA, 2006), 29–73.

nobility, the Reform's architects did not just aim at solidifying the entire social pyramid but also firmly buttressed the exclusivity of the kings' position at the apex of that pyramid. This sumptuary elevation of the royal house above regional lords and above other groups of nobility allowed perpetuation of the image of its overall superiority long after the decline of the Western Zhou.³⁷

It is most remarkable in retrospect that the Zhou house was able to initiate and promulgate the Reform despite its aggravating weakness. Since the reform was promulgated during the age of dynastic decline, it is clear that it was not enforced on regional lords but rather imposed more-or-less voluntarily, perhaps out of respect to the ongoing religious prestige of the Zhou kings. This successful imposition of an entirely new set of sumptuary rules throughout the Zhou realm calls, in turn, into question Li Feng's archeological evidence for the regional lords' "drifting away" from the Zhou center (pp. 116–121). While proliferation of new pottery types and of a few local types of bronze vessels in Shandong may be significant, in terms of local cultural assertiveness, it is clear that in terms of major status-defining cultural criteria the Shandong (and other) polities followed the Zhou lead to the very end of the Western Zhou period, and even beyond.

The last aspect of the symbolic power of the Zhou dynasty which had far-reaching consequences, and which I want to address here, concerns the rise of the state of Qin 秦. Li Feng correctly identifies the Qin ascendancy as one of the most significant developments in the aftermath of the fall of the Western Zhou; yet he largely reduces this part of his discussion to the military aspects of the Qin conquest of the Wei River valley, while paying no attention at all to the symbolical importance of the Qin occupation of the Zhou heartland. Yet this occupation—which actually might have been much slower than suggested by Li Feng³⁸—was not

37. No intact Zhou royal tombs have ever been excavated; hence the precise composition of the sets of ritual vessels therein is not clear. However, there is consensus that initially, at least, the Zhou kings constituted a separate ritual level; their tombs differed from those of regional lords and of other aristocrats both in terms of their shape and in terms of numbers of sacrificial items. See details in Falkenhausen, *Chinese Society*; and Yin Qun 印群, *Huanghe zhongxiayou diqu de Dong Zhou muzang zhidu* 黄河中下游地区的东周墓葬制度 (Beijing: Shehui kexue chubanshe, 2001). The political importance of the royal sumptuary privileges is exemplified in a *Zuo zhuan* 左傳 anecdote, which tells of the refusal of King Xiang of Zhou 周襄王 (r. 651–619 B.C.E.) to grant them to his powerful protector, Lord Wen of Jin 晉文公 (r. 636–628 B.C.E.), claiming that this would be equivalent to "establishing two kings" (see *Chunqiu Zuo zhuan zhu* 春秋左傳注, annotated by Yang Bojun 楊伯峻 [Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1981], Xi 25.1: 432–33).

38. From the careful analysis of Qin burials conducted by Teng Mingyu 滕銘予, it appears that the Qin movement into the Wei River valley was much more gradual than suggested by textual sources analyzed by Li Feng, and that it was completed only in

just a military accomplishment. Rather, the Qin had successfully posited itself as both the proximate ally and the rightful heir of the Zhou house.

Whether or not the Qin alliance with the Zhou began already during Western Zhou times is disputable,³⁹ but it is highly significant that it flourished throughout much of the Eastern Zhou period. Although textual sources contain few clues about the Qin-Zhou relations, the paleographic and material evidence indicate Qin's intimate proximity to the Zhou. Thus, Qin maintained marital ties with the Zhou house and the kings were paying occasional visits to Qin long after the tradition of royal visits elsewhere was discontinued, suggesting a kind of "special relations" with the Qin. Moreover, Qin mortuary assemblages disclose unusual faithfulness to the Western Zhou models; the shape, the ornament of the Qin vessels, and even the content of the Qin bronze inscriptions—all are indicative of much stronger attachment to the Zhou past than is evident elsewhere in the Zhou world.⁴⁰ Lothar von Falkenhausen has recently asserted that "Qin stretched its ostensible loyalty toward the Zhou to the point of identification with the Zhou—an identification that could, and eventually did lead to the latter's replacement by a new Qin dynasty."⁴¹ This observation, which succinctly summarizes the currently emerging new understanding of the Qin political trajectory, is yet another reminder of the lasting importance of the Zhou house's unparalleled prestige. It is this prestige, rather than just convenient Wei River valley location, that the Qin leaders sought to inherit, and which they eventually successfully manipulated en route to becoming the new East Asian superpower.

It may be somewhat unfair that I fault Li Feng with what he *did not write*. Eschewing cultural, religious and ideological issues in favor of

the fourth century B.C.E., three centuries later than Li Feng suggests. See Teng Mingyu, *Qin wenhua: cong fengguo dao diguo de kaoguxue guancha* 秦文化: 從封國到帝國的考古學觀察 (Beijing: Xueyuan chubanshe, 2003).

39. Li Feng (pp. 262–73) proposes a highly interesting but also very speculative analysis of what he calls the Zhou-Daluo 大駱-Qin triangle, which solidified the Zhou control of the western reaches of the Wei River valley. Yet since his conjectures are primarily rooted in a single passage from the "Basic Annals of Qin" (秦本紀) of Sima Qian's (司馬遷, c. 145–90) *Shi ji* 史記, they remain largely unverifiable.

40. Various aspects of Qin's cultural and political proximity to the Zhou are discussed in Martin Kern, *The Stele Inscriptions of Ch'in Shih-huang: Text and Ritual in Early Chinese Imperial Representation* (New Haven: American Oriental Society, 2000); Pines, "The Question of Interpretation," 4–23; idem, "Biases and Their Sources: Qin History in the *Shi ji*," *Oriens Extremus* 45 (2005/2006): 10–34; see also the next note.

41. Lothar von Falkenhausen with Gideon Shelach, "Introduction: Archaeological Perspectives on the Qin 'Unification' of China," in: Yuri Pines, Gideon Shelach, Lothar von Falkenhausen, and Robin D.S. Yates, eds., *The Birth of Empire: The State of Qin Revisited* (forthcoming volume).

more straightforward military, administrative and political history, is, to be sure, an entirely legitimate author's choice. Nonetheless, I feel that addressing—even if briefly—these questions would have allowed Li Feng to present a more nuanced picture of the Zhou rule, which would further enhance the overall importance of his masterpiece for the scholars of early Chinese history.

Katheryn M. Linduff (University of Pittsburgh)

This is a book that sets out to explain the historical processes that led to the emergence and decline of the Western Zhou. Various resources, especially inscriptional evidence from bronze objects of several kinds, inform his examination. With these firmly dated and mostly recently excavated objects, the analysis already has a more secure basis than previous studies of this period. The author's ability to put those inscriptions to use brings to the study a detailed account of Western Zhou activities and accomplishments along with the potential for a nuanced understanding of their strategic military and political endeavors as well as shortcomings. Since these records are those inscribed on ritual bronzes, they do recount the comings and goings as well as attitudes of the elite of the society. Li Feng has studied the inscriptions with impressive care, has newly translated them, including some known for many years, and has constructed an extraordinarily well thought-through, plausible account of this formative period in early Chinese history. He adds to this the notion of landscape as an interpretive framework and one that figured centrally, he claims, in the process. It is about his concept of 'landscape' that I have questions.

Li Feng's use of interpretive tools or metaphors, including landscape and frontier, if defined more thoroughly might make the overall conceptualization of the book clearer. He claims the land, location, access and territoriality are important to the historical process—but do these correspond to perceived, conceptualized, constructed, and/or ideational landscapes? Is landscape a determining or contributory factor in his view (p. 159)? If so, of what sort? He mentions socio-political and socio-cultural landscapes without defining what he means by that, and perhaps more significantly, how he assesses their role in the process. As he uses 'landscape' to encompass several concepts, would it be constructive to make use of the term and its multiple meanings as it is described in the archaeological literature?⁴²

Another question is about the centrality of the notion of 'frontiers' in

42. Cf. Wendy Ashmore and Bernard Knapp, *Archaeologies of Landscape: Contemporary Perspectives* (Malden, Mass.: Blackwell Publishers, 1999).

his interpretation. This term, too, has many definitions and all of them humanly determined, and it is not clear whose idea he refers to . . . that of the Zhou or his as a historian. In any case the discussion would benefit from a definition of what constitutes a frontier? Who lives there and how do we recognize it archaeologically? Identifying the mix of peoples in a frontier is not easy, He calls the Zhou the 'native' population (pp. 289–90), but were not the peoples of the frontier also native to this place? And, who were the 'steppe' people also mentioned frequently in the discussion of the frontier dynamics and what was their importance in the demise of the Zhou? How can these peoples be identified? We must be careful to remember that commonality in material culture defines an archaeological culture, not a people.

Finally, might it be productive to think of this area rather as a 'contact zone' as Mary Louise Pratt has described for other areas of the world?⁴³ Such places are seen 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.⁴⁴ The nature of such spaces is highly permeable, constantly breached and put into question by the colonial discourse of difference and distinction.⁴⁵ For instance, Ferguson and Whitehead explain that because material circumstances (including economics), patterned social interactions and structured ways of thinking are in countless ways disrupted by the process of culture contact, they are frequently recast into something unique for the region and time.⁴⁶ This region or landscape and its marginal adaptability to agriculture and changeability of terrain in relation to the historical process is essential to Li Feng's proposed interpretation—looking at it as a contact zone might more effectively explain especially the demise of the Western Zhou.

Constance. A. Cook, Lehigh University

Two recent books by Li Feng on Western Zhou geo-politics and government are now the most comprehensive and up-to-date works on

43. Mary Louise Pratt, *Imperial Eyes: Travel Writing and Transculturation* (London: Routledge, 1992).

44. R. Brian Ferguson and N. L. Whitehead, *War in the Tribal Zone: Expanding States and Indigenous Warfare* (Santa Fe, NM: School of American Research, 2005, 2nd ed., xii).

45. Michael Taussig, *Shamanism, Colonialism, and the Wild Man: A Study in Terror and Healing* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1995); N. L. Whitehead, "While Tulips, Black Caribs and Civilized Indians: The rhetoric of ethnic transgression in the colonial possession of South America" (Paper presented at the 20th Burdock-Vary Symposium, Madison Wisconsin; Whitehead 1997); Ferguson and Whitehead, xii.

46. Ferguson and Whitehead, xii.

this mysterious era available. He has successfully combed through all archaeological and textual data to argue for a complex and sophisticated state, one that has all the markings of an “empire” although he resists using this word. In the first book, *Landscape and Power*, he examines in detail every battle and strategy involved in “the crisis and fall” of the Western Zhou, explicitly comparing it to the fall of the Roman Empire. In order to discuss the fall, he had to explain his vision of the founding, particularly since he sees that some of the very mechanisms that allowed the Zhou people to create, if briefly, a great state ultimately weakened it to foreign invasion and absorption by its neighbors. Before we discuss these mechanisms and the validity of his theory, first we must explain Li’s vision of the great state that he feels reached its peak during the 10th century B.C.E.

The founding of the great state is illustrated in the Topographical Map of China (p. xvi) and discussed the first chapter (pp. 27–90) and Appendix I (pp. 300–342). The scale of the map is too general to provide site names but key Zhou sites in the Wei River Valley and central Yellow River Valley are discussed in the first chapter and sites outlining “the periphery” are in the appendix. The map covers a massive region: The amoeba-shaped Zhou state is depicted with one foot in the Wei River Valley but spreading northeast along the Taihang Mountains into what we know as Manchuria, unevenly down the eastern coast—skipping unconquerable pockets of resistance, then rounding back to the southwest along the Huai River to a point along the Yangzi River and then northwest back to the Wei River along what is most likely the Han River Valley. Detailed maps are provided along with the discussions. He provides new information of the Zhou reach west into Gansu and east into western Shandong. His discussion of Zhou influence in the lower Fen River valley of Shanxi and to the north and south of the Yellow River into Hebei and Henan includes much new archaeological data (see pp. 28–29, 42, 44, 52, 59, 64).

In Appendix I, he provides details on four “macro-geographical dimensions” which he claims are “the four quarters” so often mentioned in the bronze inscriptions (implicitly rejecting Sarah Allan’s idea that the notion of *sifang* as used first during the Shang was a cosmological concept [*The Shape of the Turtle*, pp. 75–111]). Using a combination of excavated and transmitted textual data with an extensive knowledge of archaeological finds, he provides maps and analysis of the early Zhou push to “colonize” these regions. Basically Zhou presence is determined by the appearance in local tombs of Zhou style bronze and pottery vessels. An occasional inscription suggests marriage and political relations. What is unknown is how much of this great land mass was directly under Zhou family control and how much was simply the re-affirmation of relationships

forged over a millennium of earlier interaction. (One question this book does not attempt to answer is how did the Zhou have the resources to march east and conquer the Shang much less expand in all directions? Where did they come from?)

This vision of a great Zhou state appearing virtually out of nowhere and spreading during the first hundred years of its three hundred year existence is not new. It can be traced back to the *Shi ji* and earlier accounts of the hero-like Zhou founder kings and Zhou Gong who through institutional and military methods set up an ideal state. Li avoids recounting these legends but does try to re-affirm the methods and the traditional extent of the state using archaeological and paleographical data as well as transmitted documents which are “generally agreed” to be authentic (chapters of the *Shang shu* and certain odes in the *Shi jing*, pp. 11–12). Generally, his discussion is convincing, providing innovative and informed evaluations of the evidence.

Two mechanisms for state formation that are traditionally accepted as Zhou institutions are *fengjian* 封建 and *zongfa* 宗法. Li redefines the first, interpreted in the twentieth century as “feudalism,” as “to establish by means of marking boundaries” (p. 110); the second, he understands as simply “lineage law” (pp. 112–13). He follows the traditional interpretation that the two were interconnected systems that defined Zhou law for state expansion and inheritance. But he goes a step further by breaking *fengjian* into two separate systems. This helps to avoid the sticky problem that there is no evidence earlier than the *Zuo zhuan* for the term, much less for the use of *feng* as a “land grant”—a key concept for the layout of the great state. The term *feng*, he claims, was used to grant land or to transfer property to or among Zhou aristocratic lineages. The term *jian* referred to the establishment of regional states created to settle the east and protect the Zhou homeland. Although there is no direct proof of these systems in the bronze inscriptions, Li claims that the use of titles such as *bo* 伯 for the heads of aristocratic lineages and *hou* 侯 for the rulers of regional states (especially in the east) in the bronze inscriptions is suggestive (p. 111). One difference between his theory of state formation and the traditional explanation is that earlier scholars following the *Shi ji*, believed that the Zhou laid out an empire immediately after their conquest of the Shang. Li refines this plan to being a result of the second eastern war when the Zhou king was concerned with resolving the cultural and political east-west divisions and squashing rebellions.

Li Feng, like all historians of ancient China, relies on Warring States and Han texts to fill in the enormous information gaps left by the often cryptic bronze documents, but he warns against taking traditional records at face value (p. 99). The key text for determining Zhou and non-Zhou states is

the *Zuo zhuan* (eg. Xi 24) where *feng* is used in the sense of a land grant and not just a land boundary (*feng* had many other usages as well that had to do with the religious use of space and burial but that is not part of Li's discussion). He has significantly strengthened this traditional approach by including analyses of cultural horizons reflected in the distribution of basic pottery types, combined with any inscriptional evidence with place names found in burial grounds and data from "ancient geographical records" (pp. 20, 72 *passim*). He queries the veracity of the *Zuo zhuan* (and *Shi ji*) accounts and in the end identifies five royal centers (the *wuyi* 五邑) each with supporting settlements. This "systematic planning" of Ji 姬 surnamed (a.k.a. Zhou lineage) communities allowed the Zhou to control the restive eastern peoples from multiple centers of power unlike the Shang who only had one. The Zhou established four groups of three inter-connected Ji states around the edge of the alluvial plain where the land was rich and least likely to be flooded (p.74). The Zhou "installed" non-Zhou (non-Ji-lineage) states in less advantageous areas, such as in the floodplain of the Yellow River or the lower Fen River Valley (pp. 75–76, 87). Li establishes that this "land give away" while helping the Zhou surmount the east-west culture divide during the first century of their rule, ultimately weakened the state by dispersing Zhou wealth and allowing too much independence (pp. 89, 140).

The *zongfa* system—the term *zongfa* does not occur in Western Zhou bronze inscriptions or any pre-Han text as far as I know—of dividing the inheritance of land and political authority according to primary and secondary lines of relationship to the Zhou house helped to enforce the subjugation of regional rulers through obeisance to the ancestral cult—although the closest Li comes to describing the cult is to note the importance of the term *zong* 宗 (pp. 112–13, 139; unlike Hsu Cho-yun & Kathryn Linduff in their breakthrough but now dated book *Western Chou Civilization*, he does not discuss the relationship of the "Mandate of Heaven" to political authority). He restricts his discussion to one meaning of *zong* that he translates as "primary line," ignoring the earlier meanings connected to ancestor worship. Limiting his discussion to the geo-political factors, he notes that this extended structure of personal relationships allowed the Zhou to expand and control the Central Plains area, but that the Zhou were forced to rely on the "good-will" of these increasingly independent and self-supporting micro-regions which over time was less and less forthcoming.

It seems likely that cultural factors (although for Li cultural factors are limited mostly to the examination of pottery types), such as intermarriage with people with strong and ancient traditions along the East Coast and the Yangzi River Valley, may also have led to a dilution of the power of

the Zhou ancestral cult coterminous with the weakening of military support for the central court (compare Lothar Von Falkenhausen's discussion of "Clan Differences within the Zhou Culture Sphere" in *Chinese Society in the Age of Confucius*, pp. 164–203). Once this glue weakened and the regional rulers over time became increasingly independent and powerful, the presumed Zhou institutions of *feng*, *jian*, and *zongfa* that required close connections to the central court (and presumably its system of ancestor worship, although this is not discussed), ceased to sustain the Zhou state. Indeed the attempt to expand royal influence through land grants, including as awards to exemplary officials, reduced the size of the "Zhou estate" and the overall economic power of the Zhou court (p. 124). Li admits that this process is difficult to document using either bronze inscriptions or archaeological data (pp. 124–26).

Li notes that the greatness of the 10th century B.C.E. state is evident by the length of time—at least two centuries—it took to collapse. The structural mechanisms believed to have created a great state were not over the long run economically viable. No clear tax system to draw resources back into the centers seems to have been developed. Weak kings, powerful aristocratic families, the uncontrolled trading of land and cultivated fields among the aristocracy, the breakdown of communication and military cohesiveness—opened the Zhou to invasion from the northwest. In perhaps his most brilliant chapter "Chapter 3: "Enemies at the gate: the war against the Xianyun and the northwestern frontier"; see also Appendix 2), Li details the battles and alliances that resulted in the death of the Zhou king and the flight east of the Zhou families away from their ancestral lands. In this and the subsequent chapter, he details the aftermath of this movement, and, most interesting, the Zhou relationship to the Qin.

In sum, while not all readers might not give the same benefit of doubt to all the evidence that Li Feng presents, the wealth of data he provides shines the boldest light yet on this murky era.

5. Chen Zhi, (Hong Kong Baptist University)

Using a model different from other Western Zhou studies, Li Feng's book addresses the important issue of how the Zhou people came to power in eleventh century B.C.E. and their power dwindled in later times. According to Li, "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". This intrinsic structural tension and geo-historical context determined the fate of Western

Zhou power and forced it on a trajectory of decline until the tension was resolved in a way that meant Zhou control of the west itself was dissolved. To consolidate his theory Li Feng provides a detailed and comprehensive survey of archaeological sites, a concrete analysis of Western Zhou bronze inscriptions cross referenced with the historical accounts of the transmitted literature, and reasonable explanations of many issues which have puzzled early China specialists, such as the existence of different sites or locations of feudal states with the same name, and the different titles, i.e. earls (bo 伯), marquis (hou 侯) and dukes (gong 公) of rulers apparently of the same states. Through an analysis of the “landscape” of the Western Zhou, with its headquarters in the West and rulership over the East, Li Feng elucidates these seemingly confusing phenomena, and naturally deduces that the dispersal and the eventual downfall of the Western Zhou was destined due to the structural crisis that arose as a result of its rapid expansion and insufficient resources and means to govern the newly conquered geopolitical unity.

Li Feng’s work, as the work of an excellent archaeologist and expert of early China, is unquestionably admirable, and has brought us an abundance of new knowledge about the geography, archaeological sites, bronzes and polities of Western Zhou. The book contains a plethora of original observations, so much so that it is virtually impossible to point them out in a brief review like the present one. I found reading the author’s analysis of the geographical names of many states and places to be extremely rewarding, especially given its reliance on a cross-referenced study of bronze inscriptions and transmitted accounts. For example, historical documents unanimously attribute the founding of the state of Zheng 鄭 to You 友, Duke Huan 桓 of Zheng, who was a younger brother of King Xuan 宣 of Zhou (827/25–782 B.C.E.). However, mid- and early late Western Zhou bronze inscriptions suggest the possibility that it was descended from an earlier noble lineage, which prospered as early as the reign of King Mu 穆 of Zhou (956–918 B.C.) (pp. 246–47). The name of the state of Kuai 檜 or 郟, according to Li Feng, might be later interpolated from the character 郟, a state also recorded in transmitted literature as 緄戎, and as having allied with the Western Rong and the state of Western Shen in order to overthrow the Western Zhou (p. 249). The relocation of the states of Shen 申 and Lu 呂 is discussed in great detail alongside documentation of geographical terms, bronze inscriptions and literary sources (pp. 221–31). The state of Xing 邢, which was traditionally identified with the inscriptional form of jing 井, is also differentiated from the lineage of Jing 井 (pp. 128–29). The relocation and segmentation of the state of Guo, which has been the subject of great confusion to scholars from ancient to modern times, has become clearer

thanks to Li Feng's readings of Western Zhou bronzes, though some of his deductions remain unavoidably speculative (pp. 253–62).

If a review is by its nature meant to find flaws and to point out uncertain aspects of a scholarly work, I would like to raise the following questions to the author. They are questions for which he may find answers along his further exploration of the Western Zhou.

1. This book adopts the concept of "Landscape" defined by contemporary Western historians as a bridge between history and geography, which maintains that many historical issues such as the distribution of archaeological sites, the enfeoffment of feudal states and the transportation and connections between states, can be explained from a geographical point of view. Questions naturally arise as to what extent the "landscape" theory is applicable, and whether, in different civilizations and different regions of world, this "landscape"-centered geographical determinism is best applicable to explain the rise and fall of an empire. If it is, does a trans-temporal comparison under the same or similar "landscape" also apply? If we take the Han and Tang empires as samples, we see a similarity between these two dynasties and Western Zhou; that is, that they all were centered in an area in the Wei river valley with an administrative headquarters in modern Luoyang to oversee the Central Plain. The rise and fall of these two later empires, however, might not be easily explained by the tension between the central power and regional aristocracy, nor by the crisis intrinsic to the rapid expansion of a rising power with insufficient resources which is innately determined by "landscape."
2. In his work, Li Feng tackles three types of sources in a way that is more attentive to new developments in archaeology and more detailed in its examination of almost every remaining site of Western Zhou. The effort of the author proves fruitful and allows the book to undoubtedly surpass proceeding works on Western Zhou in many aspects. The inadequacy of historical documentation, nevertheless, forces scholars of Western Zhou to rely overwhelmingly on archaeological findings. Whereas, on the other hand, a bias in favor of concrete evidence might lead to another tendency which generates some postulations on the basis of insufficient unearthed objects and inscriptional documents. In his analysis of the internal crisis of Western Zhou, Li Feng emphasizes the tension between the royal house and aristocrats in central and regional courts, attributing the crises to the policy of "land giving" and practice of "favor to loyalty. In the inscriptions on the Duoyou 多友 *ding* 鼎, Duke Wu

武 indeed plays a role in controlling both the king's access to the military forces and the commander's access to the king. However, Li Feng's deduction that the role of Duke Wu weakened the power of the Zhou king and strengthened his own might not be necessarily true, as the identity of Duke Wu and Duoyou remains controversial. The title Duke Wu, as appearing on a few bronzes from different times, might be posthumous-rank title given to various different persons, and Duoyou could either be the younger brother of King Xuan or a military commander under the charge of Duke Wu. Although I completely agree with the author's theory that the decline of Western Zhou lies in its structural crisis, and that its structure made conflicts of interest between the royal sovereignty and aristocratic autonomy unresolvable and unrecoverable, I am hesitant on the issue of whether the inscriptions on the Duoyou ding would best explain the increasing autonomy of a Zhou noble (pp. 130–32).

3. Some typos remain in the work, such as yi 矣 for yi 奕 (p. 11 n. 21; p. 137), mian 綿 for mian 縣 (p. 47, p. 51), Hunyu 葷粥 for Xunyu (p. 142), and “Zhan yang 瞻仰” for “Zhan ang 瞻仰” (p. 202). There are also typos present in the quoted passage of the *Book of Poetry*. I also may not agree with Li Feng on some of the inscriptions. For example, in his transcription of the Zha 柞 *zhong* 鐘, Li Feng translates “Zhong Taishi you Zha” 中大師右柞 as “Zhong Taishi accompanied Zha to his right”(p. 129) Following this, he further explains: “Since Zhong Taishi in this inscription was only the youzhe . . . ” However, You here seems to me to function simply as a verb rather than anything of relevance to the official title youzhe 右者 (p. 130, and p. 130 n.109). As for the Yangjiacun 楊家村 bronzes of Meixian 眉縣, I still prefer to read the name of the person as Qiu 逯 rather than Lai 逯 as Li Feng does in his book.

One may disagree with Li Feng on some of the points that he proposes in this book. Nevertheless, his work is destined to sketch a completely new picture of Western Zhou history, and will surely provoke new thoughts on historical methodologies and the understanding of the early stages of Chinese civilization. The conceptualization presented in this study, as an investigation from the archaeological to the historical with views that range from the geographical to the political, presents a unique model in the study of Chinese historiography, and may be invoked by specialists in other areas. While the questions raised in this book are certainly not answered once and for all, the thirty years of experience in archaeology and the broad and profound knowledge on different aspects

of early China with which Li Feng is equipped has placed him high in the arena of those who specialize in early China, as is made evident by this deeply complex interdisciplinary study. Without consulting this book, a student of early China may find himself unable to discuss the rise and decline of the Western Zhou empire.