A propos de...


0. INTRODUCTION

Professor Pulleyblank has produced what is no doubt the most clearly reasoned general account in any language of the structure of Late Zhou Chinese (LZC). Among well-known earlier studies of the language, Chou Fa-kao (1959-62) may be more complete in his coverage of previous scholarship, both Chinese and western, while Yang and He (1992) range more widely in terms of both topics covered and chronological span. Harbsmeier (1981) is also quite insightful on a number of important areas, but by his own admission did not aim in his dissertation to write a new grammar of the language. In the 160-odd pages of this *Outline*, however, Prof. Pulleyblank manages to treat most if not quite all of the major constructions of LZC in a way that can be recommended to any anglophone student familiar with traditional linguistic terminology and analysis. It is indicative of the depth of Prof. Pulleyblank's scholarship that, though he refers to the *Outline* as an "introduction", "pedagogical" in aim (p. xiv), there is much here for seasoned students of the language to reflect on as well.

The present reviewer will happily admit to being a long-term user of the *Outline* in its various prepublication versions. I had the good fortune of spending several years in the mid- to late seventies at Prof. Pulleyblank's home department where rigorous seminars in classical texts, Chinese historical linguistics and paleo-
graphy were the staple fare. Various typed and eventually word-processed editions of the "Outline", kindly provided by the author over the years, have been my dog-eared companions ever since.

In some cultures it would no doubt be considered presumptuous for a former student to review the work of a mentor, but I believe it safe to assume that Prof. Pulleyblank is at least as interested in cogent responses to his work, regardless of their source, as in the deference clearly due his long and distinguished scholarly and teaching career. One of the virtues of his book is that in the many places where original analyses are introduced, the presentation is admirably clear, allowing advanced readers to see how his new proposals open up further questions and suggest hypotheses that might be tested in future studies. As Prof. Pulleyblank admits in his preface, we are "still at the stage of struggling to work out the basic patterns of Classical Chinese syntax" (pp. xiii-xiv). While the Outline is in many respects state-of-the-art, it is at the same time a call for all of us amateurs of LZC to engage in that struggle together. Indeed, some of the struggle may well have found its way into the present review – a fact that should be seen as reflecting the richness and importance of Prof. Pulleyblank's work.

1. ORGANIZATION AND TERMINOLOGY

The book is laid out in chapter and section divisions drawn in terms of several different types of distinctions: phrase-, clause- and sentence-type ("noun phrases and nominalization", "noun predication", "pronouns", "complex sentences"), semantics ("numerical expressions", "adnominal and adverbal words of inclusion and restriction") and clause-level operations ("topicalization and exposure", "negation"). Since all grammars "leak", the task of deciding precisely how to organize the grammatical phenomena of a language into a series of coherent