Disharmony in harmony with diachronic stability: The case of Chinese

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1. Preliminaries on evolutionary terminology

The literature on language change (as e.g. illustrated in the talk titles for this workshop) abounds with terms borrowed from evolutionary theory: stability, change, rate of change, competition, population, pleiotropy.[1] However, *contingency* is never mentioned, despite its major role in evolution recognized since Stephen Jay Gould (1989:288): "The modern order was not guaranteed by basic laws (natural selection, mechanical superiority in anatomical design), or even by lower-level generalities of ecology or evolutionary theory. The modern order is largely a product of contingency." (p. 288). Accordingly, "the decimation of species, and the survival of winners; is more like a lottery than a tree of progress." (Back flap of book cover). In other words, the concept of *contingency* challenges the view of change as *progress,* where *progress* is always progress towards an "ideal" end state.

[Gould, S. (1989). *Wonderful life. The Burgess Shale and the nature of history.* London: Hutchison Radius]

This is where language change comes in, which still is often tacitly assumed to likewise involve "progress" towards a "(more) stable", (more) harmonious" end state. This view is doubly faulty: it randomly selects some aspects of evolutionary theory while ignoring important factors such as *contingency*, and it wrongly assumes a parallel between the evolution of organisms and "evolution" of language. While an organism qua gene mutation incorporates anterior states, this is simply not the case for language, where the child acquirer has no access at all to anterior states of the language, or to other languages, for that matter (unless when in a multi-lingual environment and acquiring several languages simultaneously). This type of historical and typological knowledge is reserved to the linguist, and it is thus only the linguist who can make statements about a language being (un)stable or (dis)harmonious etc. (cf. Hale 2007 for a critical appraisal of this panchronic view of language change).

As a result, using evolutionary terms when describing language change should simply be avoided, and it should be kept in mind that whether a language "changes" or not is a matter of contingency. This does not mean that there are no "internal", i.e. structural constraints on change when it happens, such as Whitman's (2000) *Conservancy of structure constraint.* However, these constraints crucially involve the input available to the child acquirer, no language-extraneous factors; the latter, i.e. language-extraneous factors only influence the <u>diffusion</u> of a change, not the change itself and are therefore a matter of sociology rather than linguistics. (Again cf. Hale 2007 for the fundamental distinction between change and its diffusion.)

Notwithstanding this caveat which should have made obvious that "stable" and "unstable" languages are equally plausible, it might nevertheless prove useful to be confronted with a "stable" language such as Chinese in order to be able to relativize the current misconception, where "stable" languages are considered to be in need of an explanation, while changing, "unstable" languages are not or less so.

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[1] *Pleiotropy* refers to the phenomenon where a single gene has multiple (possibly unrelated) phenotypic expressions. This is the case of many genes, including the $FOXP_2$, which codes for a protein chain 715 amino acids long. Animals also have the $FOXP_2$: the mouse and chimpanzee versions of the gene differ in one amino acid. The human version of $FOXP_2$ differs from both these animals in additional two amino acids (cf. Dawkins 2005: 72). Dawkins, Richard (2004). *The ancestor's tale. A pilgrimage to the dawn of life*. London: Orion books.

2. What did not change in Chinese during the last 3000 years

From the pre-Archaic Chinese period (PAC), i.e. the Shang inscriptions (14th c. - 11th c. BC) on, TP and its subprojections have always been head-initial. Of the 26,000 complete sentences in the Shang corpus, 94% have SVO order, and only 6% SOV (cf. Chen Mengjia 1956, Djamouri 1988, Shen Pei 1992 among others.).

2.1. Head-initial extended verbal projection up to TP: 'S >Neg > Aux > V > O'

Data from PAC
(1)   王壴麇…
       wáng jǐng mí   (*Heji 10361*)
       king trap elk
       'The king will trap elks.'

(2)   王往于田   (*Heji 00635 r.)*
       wáng wǎng [PP yú tián]
       king go   to field
       'The king will go to the fields.'

(3)   我乎往于西   (*Heji 10050)*
       wǒ   hū   wǎng [PP yú xī]
       1PR order go   to West
       'We will order to go West.'

(4)   帝受我年
       dì   shòu   [IO wǒ] [DO nián].   (*Heji 09731 recto)*
       Di give   1PR   harvest
       '[The ancestor] Di will give us a harvest.'

(5)   侑于祖乙一牛   (*Heji 06945)*
       yòu   [PP yú zǔyǐ][QP yī   niú]
       present   to Zuyi   one ox
       'One will present to Zuyi an ox (as sacrifice).'

(6)   子商亡斷在囚   (*Heji 02940)*
       zǐ   shāng wáng duàn [PP zài huò   ]
       prince Shang NEG   end   in misfortune
       'The prince Shang will not end in misfortune.'

(7)   方允其來于沚   (*Heji 6728)*
       fāng yǔn   qí   lái   [PP yú zhǐ]
       Fang effectively FUT come   to Zhi
       'Fang will effectively come to Zhi.'

2.2. *Opposite head-directionality within the extended nominal projection:*
   Head-final NP in a head-initial DP
   (cf. Paul 2012, (to appear,a) for a similar situation in Modern Mandarin where
   the so-called subordinator *de* realizes different heads in the head-initial D-spine)

2.2.1 Head-final NP

(8a) 新黍… (*Heji* 24432 r.)   (8b) 大邑 (*Heji* 40352)
   [NP xīn shǔ]   [NP dà   yì]
      new millet   great settlement

2.2.2. Head-initial DP

Demonstrative pronouns:
(9a) 今夕其雨//之夕允雨。(D00630)
   jīn   xì   qí yǔ   // [DP Zhī xì] yǔn   yǔ
   present night FUT rain //   that night really rain
   'This night it will rain.' (prediction) // 'That night it really rained.' (result concerning
      the prediction and registered subsequently)

(9b) 及兹月有雨 (*Heji* 41867）
   jí   [DP zī   yuè] yǒu yǔ
   reach   this month have rain
   'Reaching this (coming) month, there will be rain.'

[DP [proper name] [D' common noun]]

(10a) 召方   (10b) 唐土 (*Heji* 40352)
   shào fāng   táng tǔ
   Shao tribe   Táng territory

Relative clauses

(11a) 在北史有獲羌 (Heji 00914 recto)
   zài běi shǐ   yǒu huò   qiāng
   be:at north emissary have capture Qiang
   'The emissary who is in the north will get hold of captured Qiang tribesmen (=who have
   been captured).'

(11b) 朕劅羌不死 (*Heji* 0525)
   [DP [CP zhèn jù] qiāng] bù sǐ
         1SG hurt Qiang   NEG die
   'The Qiang that I hurt will not die.'

(11c) 有疾羌其死 (*Heji* 0526)
   [DP [CP yǒu jī] qiāng] qí sǐ
         have illness Qiang FUT die
   'The Qiang who are ill will die.'

2.3. Prepositional Phrases

The PPs attested in PAC are headed by *zì* 'from', *zài* 'in, at' (cf. (6) above) and *yú* 'in, to' (cf. (2), (3), (5), (7) above). For evidence in favour of the prepositional status of *zì* 'from', *zài* 'in, at' and *yú* 'in, to', cf. Djamouri & Paul (1997, 2009) and references therein.

(12a) 王自余入　(H 3458)
　　　Wáng [vP [PP zì　yú] rù　]
　　　king　　　from Yu　enter
　　　'The king will enter from Yu.'

(12b) 其有來艱自方　　　(*Heji 24150*)
　　　qí　yǒu lái jiàn　　[PP zì　fāng]
　　　FUT have come bad.news　from Fang
　　　'There will be bad-news coming from the Fang region.'

3. Innovations

3.1. Sentence-final particles (attested since 5th c. BC)
(For extensive evidence in favour of SFPs as complementizers in a three-layered split CP since their earliest attestation, cf. Paul 2009, 2014; Djamouri et al. 2009; Pan & Paul 2016).

(13)　'Attitude > Force > Clow' (cf. Paul 2005, 2009, 2014)

Importantly, this split CP is observed in Classical Chinese (5th c.– 3rd c. BC.) where SFPs are first attested. The first C-layer above TP (ClowP) is instantiated by e.g. *yě*. SFPs in the next higher projection indicate the sentence type (ForceP) e.g. interrogative (*hū₁*), exclamative (*hū₂*) or imperative. The highest C head finally expresses the attitude of the speaker/hearer, e.g. astonishment (*zai*), doubt, admonition etc.

Classical Chinese (5th c.– 3rd c. BC.):
(14) 我王者也乎哉！　(*Guoyu* 4; 5th c. - 3rd c. BC)
　　　[AttitudeP [ForceP [lowCP[TP Wǒ wáng-zhě　] yě　] hū　　] zāi]!
　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　1SG king -NOM　Clow FORCE ATT
　　　'How come (that you wrongly assume) we might retain the kingship!'

(15)　魯可取乎? 對曰不可。(*Zuozhuan*, Min 1; 4th c. BC)
　　　[CP [TP Lǔ kě　qǔ] hū　]? Duì-yuē bù　kě
　　　　　　Lu can take FORCE　answer　NEG can
　　　'Can Lu be annexed? He answered: No, it cannot.'

(16) 不知天棄魯乎　(*Shiji*: 33; 1542)
　　　Bù　zhī　[ForceP [TP tiān　qì　　Lǔ] hū　　]
　　　NEG know　Heaven abandon Lu FORCE
　　　'I do not know whether Heaven has abandoned Lu.'

Modern Mandarin:
(17) [ForceP [TP Tā　bì　　yè] le　] ma]]] / *ma　　le ?
　　　　　　　　3SG finish study LowC FORCE/　FORCE LowC
　　　'Has she graduated?'

3.2. Postpositions since 1st c. BC (cf. Djamouri/Paul/Whitman 2013b)

Classical Chinese:
(18) 女子為自殺於房中者二人。(*Shiji* 史記 5.16, 1st c. BC)
Nǚzǐ   wéi zì   shā   [PreP yú [PostP fáng zhōng]] zhě èr   rén.
woman be   self suicide   at   room in   NOM two person
'[After the death of their husband] There were two women who killed themselves in their room.'

(19) 既覺洗浣於房前曬。(*Mishasaibu* 彌沙塞部，五分律, 5th c. AD)
Jì   jué xǐhuàn [PreP yú [PostP fáng qián]]   shài.
after rise wash   at   house in.front.of sun
'After he had woken up and washed himself, he sunned himself in front of the house.'

(20) 二年後伐越，敗越於夫湫。 (*Shiji* 史記, Wu Zixu liezhuan 伍子胥列傳, 1st c. BC)
[PostP Èr nián hòu] fá   yuè bài   yuè yú fúqiū.
       two year after fight Yue defeat Yue at Fuqiu
'After two years, he attacked the Yue and defeated them at Fuqiu.'

(21) 閏當在十一月後 (*Hanshu* 漢書, Lü li zhi 律曆志, 2nd c. AD)
Rùn   dāng zài [PostP shíyī   yuè   hòu]. <<=argument of *zài*
leap:month must be:at   eleven month after
'The leap month must occur after the eleventh month.'

Modern Mandarin:

(22a) Nǐmen [PostP yuánzé   shàng] kěyǐ zhèyàng zuò.
      2PL   principle on   can   this.way do
      'You can in principle do it this way.'

(22b) Tā [PostP [jīn -nián nián-chū   ] yǐlái] yǐjīng chū   -le   sān-cì   chāi.
      3SG   this-year year-beginning since   already go.out-PERF 3 -time errand
       'He has already been on business trips three times since the beginning of this year.'

(22c) [PostP [PP Zìcóng [TP tā   shàng dàxué]] yǐhòu
              since   3SG go   university after
       wǒmen yīzhí   méi jiàn miàn
       1PL   always NEG see face
       'Since he entered university, we have no longer met.'

Circumpositional Phrases of the form 'prep XP postp' obey the same "Path over place" principle as observed for other languages with CircPs such as German and Dutch (cf. Svenonius 2006 and many papers in Cinque & Rizzi 2010). This provides additional evidence in favour of the adpositional status of prepositions and postpositions (*contra* Huang/Li/Li 2009, Cheng & Sybesma 2015, among others). In the case of spatial location, it is the preposition that indicates Path and we thus obtain the structure [PreP prep [PostP XP postp]] as in [PreP cóng [PostP zhuōzi shàng]] 'from table on' = 'from the table'. By contrast, in temporal location, Path is expressed by the postposition, thus leading to [PostP [PreP prep XP] postp] as the structure for [PostP [PreP cóng míngtiān] qǐ] 'from tomorrow on'. (For further discussion, cf. Djamouri/Paul/Whitman 2013b; Paul 2015, ch. 4).

4. What did change: the distribution of adjunct XPs

While Chinese has always been SVO, from the earliest textual sources, the Shang inscriptions (14th c. - 11th c. BC), up to Modern Mandarin, there have been important changes in the distribution of adjunct phrases, from both pre- and postverbal position in PAC to exclusively preverbal position in Modern Mandarin, reflecting changes in the format of the *v*P (cf. Djamouri & Paul 1997, 2009; Djamouri/Paul/Whitman 2013a). Whereas argument XPs in PAC must occupy the postverbal position (unless when clefted), adjunct XPs (PPs and NPs) can appear in three positions: preceding the subject, between the subject and the verb, or postverbally (after the object when present). In (23), the argument PP *yú shāng* 'in(to) Shang' subcategorized for by the verb *rù* 'enter' must occupy the postverbal position, whereas the adjunct PP *yú qī yuè* 'in the seventh month' precedes the verb.

(23) 王于七月入于商   (*Heji 7780 r.*)
      wáng [PP yú qī- yuè] [*v*P rù [PP yú shāng]]
      king   in seven-month   enter   in Shang
      'The king in the seventh month will enter the Shang city.'

Non-phrasal adverbs such as *yì* 'also', *yǔn* 'indeed' have always been confined to the preverbal position below the subject and excluded from postverbal position, from PAC on:

(24) 五月癸巳雨乙巳亦雨   (*Heji 20943*)
      [Wǔ-yuè guǐsì] yǔ, yǐsì yì [*v*P yǔ]
       five-month *guisi*.day rain *yisi*.day also rain
      'On the day *Guisi* of the fifth month, it rained; on the day *yisi*, it also rained.'

(25) 㞢伐于黄尹亦㞢于蔑   (*Heji 00970*)
      yòu fá yú Huángyǐn yì [*v*P yòu yú Miè]
      offer victim to Huangyin also   offer to Mie
      'We will offer victims (as sacrifice) to Huanyin, and also to Mie.'

(26) 壬辰允不雨風   (*Heji 12921 v.*)
      rénchén yǔn [NegP bù [*v*P yǔ]] fēng
      Renchen.day indeed NEG rain blow
      'On the *Renchen* day, indeed it did not rain, but the wind blew.'

This property is consistent with VO languages, and equally holds for English. It applies to all subsequent stages of Chinese up to Modern Mandarin.

4.1. *The distribution of adjunct phrases in PAC*
4.1.1. 'S V (O) [adjunct XP]'
Adjunct phrases in postverbal position present a feature in which PAC patterns more strongly with typical head-initial languages than modern Mandarin, since in modern Mandarin adjunct phrases must precede the verb. Accordingly, the equivalents of (27) - (32) in Modern Mandarin would be unacceptable.

(27) 乎多犬网鹿于甕   (*Heji 10976 r.*)
      hū duō quǎn [*v*P wǎng lù [PP yú nóng]]
      order numerous dog.officer net deer at Nong
      'Call upon the many dog-officers to net deer at Nong.'

(28) 乞令吳以多馬亞省在南　(*Heji 564 r.*)
　　 qì lìng wú yǐ duō　măyă　　　　 [ᵥP xǐng [PP zài nán]]
　　 Qi order Wu lead numerous military.officer　inspect　at south
　　 'Officer Qi will order Wu to lead the numerous military officers
　　 　to carry out an inspection in the south.'

(29) 其品祠于王出　(*Heji 23713*)
　　 qí [ᵥP pǐn　　　 cí　　　　 [PP yú [TP wáng chū　]]]
　　 FUT　*pin*.sacrifice *ci*.sacrifice　at　king go.out
　　 'One will perform a *pin* and a *ci* sacrifice when the king goes out.'

(30) 王入今月　(*Heji 20038*)
　　 wáng [ᵥP rù　 [NP jīn　 yuè]
　　 king　enter　present month
　　 'The king will enter (the city) this month.'

(31a) 其雨丁　　　　　　　　　 (31b) 允雨丁 *(Heji 33943)*
　　 qí [ᵥP yǔ [NP dīng]]　　　　　　 yǔn　[ᵥP yǔ [NP dīng]]
　　 FUT　rain　*ding*.day　　　　　　 indeed　rain　*ding*.day
　　 'It will rain on the day Ding.'　　 'Indeed, it rained on the day Ding.'

(32) 屮于河來辛酉　(*Tun 1119*)
　　 yòu　 yú hé [laí　xīn-yǒu]
　　 present to He　next *xinyou*.day
　　 '[We will] present a sacrifice to the divinity He on the next *xinyou* day.'

4.1.2. 'S [adjunct XP] V (O)'
In contrast to the postverbal position where only one adjunct is permitted, multiple adjuncts are attested in the preverbal position to the right of the subject:

(33) 王在十二月在襄卜　(*Heji 24237*)
　　 wáng　 [ᵥP [PP zài shí'èr yuè] [ᵥP [PP zài xiāng] [ᵥP bǔ　]]]
　　 king　　　at 12　　month　　 at Xiang　divine
　　 'The king in the twelfth month at the place Xiang made the divination.'

(34) 王今丁巳出　(*Heji 07942*)
　　 wáng [NP jīn　 dīngsì] chū　　'The king on this *Dingsi* day goes out.'
　　 king　　actual *dingsi* go.out

(35) 王自余入　(*Heji 3458*)
　　 wáng [PP zì　yú] rù　　　'The king will enter from Yu.'
　　 king　　from Yu enter

4.1.3. [Adjunct XP] S V (O)
Finally, adjunct phrases can also occupy the sentence-initial position to the left of the subject:

(36) 于辛巳王圍召方　(*Heji 33023*)
　　 [PP yú xīnsì　]　 wáng wéi　　　 shào fāng.
　　 　at *xinsi*.day king　surround Shao tribe
　　 'On the *Xinsi* day, the king will surround the Shao tribe.'

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(37) 今六月王入于商　*(Heji 7775)*
　　　[NP jīn　　　liù-yuè　] wáng rù　　yú shāng
　　　　　present six-month　king　enter　in　Shang
　　　'This sixth month, the king will enter the Shang city.'

(38) 在𡥉王其先遘捍　*(Ying 593)*
　　　[PP zài nǚ] wáng qí　xiān　　gòu　hàn
　　　　　at Nü　king FUT advance meet　opposition
　　　'At Nü, the king will advance and meet an armed opposition.'

4.2. The distribution of adjunct phrases in Classical Chinese
Adjunct XPs in Classical Chinese can still occur both in the pre- and postverbal position:

(39)　… 故以羊易之　　　　　　　　　　(*Mengzi*, Liang hui wang, 4th-3rd c. BC)
　　　… gù　　　[PP yǐ　yáng] yì　　　zhī
　　　　therefore　with sheep replace 3SG
　　　'… therefore [I] replace it [i.e. the ox] with a sheep.'

(40) 我非愛其財而易之以羊也。 *(ibid.)*
　　　Wǒ fēi ài　　qí cái　ér　yì　　zhī [PP yǐ　yáng] yě
　　　1SG NEG cherish 3SG value CONJ replace 3SG　　with sheep　SFP
　　　'It is not that I attach a great importance to its value [i.e. the value of the ox]
　　　 and therefore replaced it with a sheep.'

There seems to exist no consensus about possible semantico-pragmatic differences between the preverbal and the postverbal positions for adjunct PPs in CC (cf. Lu Guoyao (1982) and Liu Jingnong (1998) for conflicting views).

4.3. The distribution of adjunct phrases in subsequent stages
In the stages subsequent to Classical Chinese, adjunct XPs are no longer acceptable in postverbal position and must occur preverbally, preceding or following the subject. The postverbal position remains the default position for argument XPs. This is the situation as still observed for today's Mandarin Chinese where adjunct phrases can occur in all preverbal positions, but are totally excluded from the postverbal position (cf. Paul (to appear,b)):

(41)（明天）他（明天）會（明天）來
　　　{[NP Míngtiān]} tā　{míngtiān} huì {míngtiān} lái　(*míngtiān)
　　　　tomorrow　3SG tomorrow　will　tomorrow　come tomorrow
　　　'He will come tomorrow.'

(42)（在圖書館）你（在圖書館）能（在圖書館）複印
　　　{[PreP Zài túshūguǎn]} nǐ　{zài túshūguǎn} néng {zài túshūguǎn}　fùyìn (*zài túshūguǎn)
　　　　in library　　　2SG in library　　can　in library　xerox　in library
　　　'You can make photocopies in the library.'

(43)　（除夕以前）我（除夕以前）要（除夕以前）回家

　　　{[PostP chúxī　　　　yǐqián]} wǒ {chúxī yǐqián} yào {chúxī yǐqián}
　　　　　New.Year's eve before　1SG　NYE　before　need　NYE　before
　　huí　jiā　　(*chúxī yǐqián)
　　return home　　NYE　before
　　　'I need to go home before New Year's Eve.'

In English as well, adjunct NPs, PPs and PostPs (*that way, with care, on Tuesday; ten years ago*) behave alike and contrast in their distribution with adverbs (*carefully, subsequently*) (cf. Emonds 1987, Ng Siew Ai 1987, McCawley (1988); *contra* Larson 1985).

4.4. *Wrap-up*

In the period from Pre-Archaic Chinese (PAC) up to Classical Chinese (CC), adjunct phrases can appear in three positions, to the left or the right of the subject and postverbally (i.e. after the object when present). While the semantic constraints governing the distribution of adjuncts remain to be elucidated, it is evident that the preverbal adjunct position cannot be likened to focus, since focalization of adjuncts in PAC requires a cleft structure with an overt matrix copular predicate (cf. section 5.1 below). Given the asymmetry between multiple adjuncts in preverbal position vs only one adjunct XP postverbally, the PAC and CC facts can be handled by allowing the verb to select exactly one VP shell (cf. Larson 1988):

(44)　AdvP [$_{vP}$ V [$_{VP}$ O [$_{V'}$ tv adjunct XP]]].

The postverbal adjunct is a complement of the verb and thus within the VP. The possibility of exactly one adjunct XP to the right of the verb indicates that selection of just one such shell was allowed. The change observed in the stages subsequent to Classical Chinese and resulting in the disappearance of postverbal adjunct XPs can then be formulated as loss of the VP shell structure.

5. The different cases of surface 'OV' order

Chinese has always been disharmonic: head-initial projections in the extended VP up to TP, on the one hand, and head-final NP, CP and postpositions, on the other. Examined carefully, all of the observed SOV cases in PAC turn out to either involve focalization of the object or object pronouns in the context of negation. Importantly, the relevant focus pattern in PAC was restricted to a type of cleft construction, where the focused constituent follows an item that functions as a matrix copular predicate. Needless to say, this pattern instantiates VO order. Likewise, under an analysis where the object pronoun occupies the specifier of a functional projection the examples illustrating an at first sight preverbal object position also show a head-complement structure. (For a detailed discussion of the structure 'Neg pronoun V', cf. Djamouri 2000). This removes any coherent basis for the claim that Chinese was predominantly SOV before the 11th c. BC.

5.1. *Focus clefts in PAC*

It is complete sets of predictions in the Shang inscriptions that permit us to identify superficial OV structures as clear cases of focalisation. (45a) presents a prediction in the form of a simple assertion displaying VO order. Against this background, two alternatives, (45b) and (45c), are proposed. In these alternatives, *gào* 'make a ritual announcement' presents the presupposition, whereas the goal PP presents the focus. (Note that Li & Thompson 1974 completely neglect the rich corpus of PAC. Their two examples of SOV order date from nearly thousand years

later: while one is incomplete, hence misparsed, the other example illustrates the fronted interrogative object pronoun *shéi* 'who(m)': 吾誰欺 *Wú shéi qí* 'Who do I deceive?' (Analects 9, 5th c. -3rd c. BC) (cf. Djamouri/Paul/Whitman (2013a) for further discussion).

(45a) 勿告于中丁

    [TPmatrix *pro* wù   [vP gào   [PP yú zhōngdīng]]]   *(Heji 13646 recto)*
                must.not   announce   to Zhongding
    'We must not make a ritual announcement to [the ancestor] Zhongding."

(45b) 勿于大甲告

    [TPmatrix *pro* wù   [TP-1 [PP yú Dàjiǎ] [vP gào tPP]]]   *(ibid.)*
                must.not   to Dajia   announce
    'It must not be to [the ancestor] Dajia that we shall make a ritual announcement."

(45c) 勿于大戉告

    [TPmatrix *pro* wù   [TP-1 [PP yú Dàwù] [vP gào tPP]]]   *(ibid.)*
                must.not   to Dawu   announce
    "It must not be to [the ancestor] Dawu that we shall make a ritual announcement."

In surface order terms, a clefted constituent is postverbal: it follows the matrix verb, i.e. the copula, *qua* its occupying the highest specifier position in the copula's clausal complement. Given that (except for subject clefts), this complement can never contain an explicit subject, it is labeled 'TP-1' here.

(46) 唯南庚害王

    [TPmatrix Wéi [TP Nángēng [vP hài   wáng]]] (*Heji 01823 r.*)
            be   Nangeng   harm king
    'It is the ancestor Nangeng that harms the king.'

The structure for the focalization of adjuncts is the same, i.e. it involves a cleft structure with a matrix copular predicate selecting a complement, whose specifier hosts the focalized adjunct.

(47) 王勿唯今日往   (*Heji 07351*)

    [TPmatrix Wáng wù [vP wéi [TP-1 [NP jīn   rì] [vP wǎng]]]]
            king   NEG   be   present day   go
    'It must not be today that the king will go.'

(48) 唯于辛巳其雨   (*Heji 20912*)

    [TPmatrix Wéi [TP-1 [PP yú xīnsì   ]] [vP qí   yǔ   ]]]
            be   at *xinsi*.day   FUT rain
    'It is on the day *xinsi* that it will rain.'

In surface order terms, a focalized adjunct again is postverbal, i.e. it follows the copula *qua* its being part of the copula's clausal complement. It cannot be confused with an "ordinary" preverbal adjunct preceding the matrix predicate (as illustrated in section 3.2); the obligatory presence of the copula when clefting an adjunct XP indicates that the adjunct is not part of the matrix clause. To conclude, all of the attested examples where an argument NP or PP occupies a (surface) preverbal position involve focalization (cf. Djamouri (1988, 2001). Importantly, the relevant focus pattern in pre-Archaic Chinese is restricted to a type of cleft

construction, akin to modern Mandarin *shi…de* clefts (cf. Paul & Whitman 2008). On the cleft analysis, the focused constituent is postverbal, because to the right of the matrix copula: it occupies the specifier position of the projection selected as complement by the copula. Accordingly, this construction illustrates 'head-complement' order precisely in accordance with 'VO', not 'complement-head' order.

5.2. *The* bǎ *construction*
Li & Thompson's (1974) main "evidence" for alleged SOV order in Mandarin, i.e. the *bǎ* construction 'S *bǎ* O V', in fact also involves 'head-complement' order, as does the entire extended verbal projection: *bǎ* selects as complement a verbal projection to its right (cf. Whitman 2000, Whitman & Paul 2005, Paul 2015, chap. 2):

(49) Tā [$_{vP}$ bǎ [$_{BaP}$ Lǐsì [$_{Ba'}$ t$_{ba}$ [$_{AspP}$ hěnxīnde [$_{Asp'}$ pāoqì   -le [$_{vP}$ t$_{paoqi}$ [$_{VP}$ t$_{paoqi}$ t$_{Lisi}$]]]]]]]]
      3SG BA   Lisi   cruelly   abandon-PERF
      'She cruelly abandoned Lisi.'

(50) Wǒ [$_{vP}$ bǎ [$_{BaP}$ shū [$_{Ba'}$ t$_{ba}$ [$_{AspP}$ [$_{Asp'}$ [sòng-gěi]-le [$_{ApplP}$ tā [$_{Appl°}$ t$_{sòng-gěi}$] [$_{VP}$ t$_{tā}$ [t$_{sòng}$ t$_{shū}$]]]]]]]]]
      1SG BA   book   give-APPL-PERF 3SG
      'I gave him a book (as a present).'

This analysis also invalidates Cao & Yu's (2000) assumption that the *bǎ* construction - analysed as 'S [$_{PP}$ *bǎ* NP] V' - emerged due to intense contact with Sanskrit via the translation into Chinese of Buddhist sutras after the 3rd c. AD. In fact, be it the contact with Sanskrit or with the surrounding OV languages such as Tibetan, Mongolian, Manchu, contact has <u>not</u> led to any major word order change in Chinese (cf. section 6 below).

5.3. *Argument PPs in preverbal position in Mandarin*
Although the postverbal position is the default position for argument XPs in Mandarin, some argument PPs occur in preverbal position. These can be divided into three cases.

(i) For a limited subset of donatory verbs (e.g. *jì* 寄 'send' and *xiě xìn* 寫(信) 'write (a letter)' and for transitive verbs optionally involving the meaning of transfer, the goal *gěi* PP 'to XP' can either follow or precede the verb (cf. Paul & Whitman 2010 for further discussion):

(51a) Wǒ {[$_{PP}$ gěi Měilì]} jì   -le   sān ge bāoguǒ {[$_{PP}$ gěi Měilì]}
       1SG   to Mary send-PERF 3 CL parcel   to Mary
       'I sent three parcels to Mary.'

(51b) Nǐ   kuài {[$_{PP}$ gěi Měilì]} dǎ   diànhuà   {[$_{PP}$ gěi Měilì]}
       2SG fast   to Mary   strike phone   to Mary
       'Hurry up and phone Mary.'

(51c) Wǒ {[gěi Měilì]} dǎ -le   yī jiàn máoyī {[gěi Měilì]}
       1SG   to Mary knit-PERF 1 CL sweater to Mary
       'I knitted Mary a sweater.'   (postverbal PP).
       'I knitted a sweater for Mary.' (preverbal PP)

(ii) The patient/theme of complex predicates in the form of V-O phrases is encoded as a preverbal PP (Paul 1988: chapter 4)

(52) Wǒ zhǐ shì kāi wánxiào, nǐ   kě   bié [PP gēn wǒ] rèn   zhēn
      1SG only be open joke   2SG really NEG   with 3SG recognize true
      'I'm only joking; for heaven's sake, don't take me seriously.'

(53) Nǐ   wèishenme [PP gēn wǒ] jiàn wài ?
      2SG why   with 1SG see   foreign
      'Why do you treat me as a stranger?'

(iii) Some PPs headed by *duì* 'to(wards)' (mostly with stative predicates) and *wàng* 'in the direction of, to(wards)' might be analysed as encoding the argument rather than an adjunct:

(54a) Wǒ [duì   Lǎozhāng] yǒu yīdiǎn yìjiàn   (Lü Shuxiang et al. 2000: 183)
      1SG to(wards) Laozhang have a.bit   opinion
      'I'm somewhat prejudiced against Laozhang.'

(54b) Dàjiā   [duì   wǒ] dōu hěn rèqíng
      everybody   to(wards) 1SG all   very warm
      'Everybody is very kind to me.'

(55a) Wǒmen [duì   nǐ] wánquán xìnrèn   (Lü Shuxiang et al. 2000:182)
      1PL   to(wards) 2SG completely have.confidence
      'We have complete confidence in you.'

(55b) Rénjiā dōu xìnrèn   tā, nǐ   yě kěyǐ xìnrèn   tā .
      people all have.confidence 3SG 2SG also can have.confidence 3SG
      'Everybody trusts him, you can trust him, too.'

(56a) Xiǎohái [wàng   tā] xiào -le   xiào   (56b) Nǐ [wàng   qián] kàn
      child   to(wards) 3SG smile-PERF smile   2SG to(wards) front look
      'The child smiled at him.'   'Look ahead.'

6. The Tangwang language
Chinese and more generally Sinitic languages have always had an underlying VO order. The alleged OV characteristics observable in some non-Mandarin varieties can only be fully understood and analysed against the backdrop of this robust VO order.
       This can be illustrated by the Hezhou subvarieties of Northwestern Mandarin spoken in the Gansu Province, such as the Tangwang language. The presence of OV order in addition to VO in Tangwang is in general said to be due to contact with Mongolic OV languages spoken in the same area (cf. Chen Yuanlong 1985). However, this claim does not bear further scrutiny (cf. Djamouri 2013, 2015), because the pre- vs. postverbal position of the object in Tangwang depends on its syntactic-semantic properties and thus contrasts with the generalized OV order in the Mongolic languages.
       The main evidence for VO as unmarked underlying word order in Tangwang is the fact that noun incorporation respects VO order (cf. (57a)), and thus contrasts sharply with noun incorporation in Khalkha Mongolian displaying OV order (cf. (58b)):

(57a) 我吃肉/洋芋/兔肉寮
    wɔ [v tʂʰɿ-ʐʉ   /-jãjɥ /-tʰu.ʐʉ   -ljɔ]
    1SG eat –meat/-potato/-rabbit.meat-PERF
    'I have eaten meat/potatoes/rabbit.'

(57b) *我吃寮 肉/洋芋/兔肉
    wɔ [v tʂʰɿ-ljɔ]   ʐʉ /jãjɥ /tʰu.ʐʉ
    1SG eat-PERF meat/potato/rabbit.meat

(58a) Ter xün [DP zurg -ig   ] [v° zur -dag]
    that man picture-ACC   paint-HAB
    'That man paints (the) pictures.'

(58b) Ter xün [v° zurag   -zur -dag]
    that man   picture-paint-HAB
    'That man is a picture-painter.'

    Indefinite quantified phrases in Tangwang must likewise follow the verb, but unlike bare nouns cannot be incorporated (59b). When in preverbal position, a QP is necessarily analysed as definite (irrespective of the presence/absence of the demonstrative pronoun 'this') and must carry the objective suffix –xa (59c).

(59a) 我吃寮（*这）三/几个果子
    wɔ tʂʰɿ-ljɔ (*tʂə) sɛ̃/tɕi   kɛ kwɤtsɿ
    1SG eat -PERF DEM   three/few CL fruit
    'I have eaten three/some fruits.'

(59b) *我吃三个果子寮
    *wɔ [v° tʂʰɿ-sɛ̃   -kɛ-kwɤtsɿ-ljɔ]
    1SG   eat -three-CL-fruit -PERF

(59c) 我(这)三/几个果子*(哈)吃寮
    wɔ (tʂə) sɛ̃/tɕi   kɛ kwɤtsɿ*(-xa) tʂʰɿ-ljɔ
    1SG DEM three/few CL fruit   -OBJ eat-PERF
    'I have eaten these/the three/few fruits.'

    By contrast, definite DPs must occur in preverbal position; this also holds for the indirect object in a double object construction, irrespective of its semantic-syntactic properties:

(60a) 我書哈 (三个) 老師哈卡寮
    wɔ ʂu -xa (sɛ̃ kɛ) lɔʂɿ -xa kʰa -lʲɔ
    1SG book-OBJ 3 CL teacher-OBJ give-PERF
    'I gave the book to (the) three teachers / the teacher.'

(60b) * 我書哈卡老師寮
    wɔ ʂu -xa [v° kʰa-lɔʂɿ-lʲɔ]
    1SG book-OBJ   give- teacher-PERF

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(60c) *我書哈卡寮(三个) 老師(哈)

    *wɔ ʂu -xa kʰa -lʲɔ (sɛ̃ kɛ) lɔʂ̺ (-xa)

    1SG book-OBJ give-PERF 3 CL teacher -OBJ

Tangwang thus has OV order, but it is conditioned by clearly identifiable constraints which shows that VO is the underlying order. This VO order is confirmed by the head-initial nature of the projections within the extended verbal projection: adverbs, negation and modal auxiliaries precede the verb.

    Moreover, many alleged OV characteristics in Tangwang likewise exist in MM. The fact that adjunct XPs must precede the verb mirrors the situation in Mandarin Chinese. Mandarin Chinese likewise has cases of argument PPs that must occur in preverbal position. Postpositions have existed alongside prepositions in Mandarin since the 2nd c.

7. Conclusion

Chinese, and more generally, Sinitic languages have always had an underlying VO order. The alleged OV characteristics observable in different varieties can only be fully understood and analysed against the backdrop of this robust VO order.

    Evidently, there have been changes in Chinese in the past 3000 years. However, the changes observed cannot be formulated in terms of reducing "disharmony" etc. Quite on the contrary, the emergence of SFPs and postpositions can be conceived of as increasing the already existing disharmony displayed by the combination of VO order and head-final NP.

    Although statistical correlations can be established in terms of harmony and disharmony, these correlations do not result in viable concepts with explanatory force for linguistic theory. Even a language such as Japanese which had been claimed to be the prototype of a fully harmonic language, turns out to be of a "mixed" type under a careful analysis, taking into account its array of functional categories (ref. Whitman 2001).

    Moreover, the alleged harmonic or disharmonic nature of a language has no influence whatsoever on acquisition, and hence no influence on change, either (change being "incorrect" acquisition) (cf. Newmeyer 2005, chapter 3 and references therein).

    In that respect, Chinese nicely confirms that "(dis)harmony" is an artefact and therefore does not play any role in language change.

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