

**Grammatical Changes Reflected in the Chapters  
“Yaodian” 堯典 and “Gaoyao mo” 皋陶謨 in *Shangshu* 尚書  
and Relevant Chapters in *Shiji* 史記**

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It is not very clear when “Yaodian” and “Gaoyao mo” were compiled. Qu Wanli (1983: 4-6) claimed that “Yaodian” was compiled during the Warring States period (475-221 BC). To be more precise, he argued that it was compiled after Confucius’ time (551-479 BC) and before Mencius (372-289 BC) was flourishing based on ten pieces of evidence.<sup>1</sup> He also argued that “Gaoyao mo” was compiled around the same time or slightly later than “Yaodian”. The *Shiji*

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<sup>1</sup> The ten pieces of evidence proposed by Qu are the following: 1. This chapter begins with “曰若稽古” (it is said that in antiquity), which proves that “Yaodian” is a compilation of past events by later people; 2. This chapter is easy to read and is quite different from the Bronze Inscriptions of the Western Zhou; 3. In this chapter, the emperor refers himself as *Di* 帝. In the Oracle Bone inscriptions (OBI) and Bronze inscriptions (BI), 帝 refers to a deceased king. It is after the mid Spring and Autumn period that 帝 means a current king; 4. In OBI and BI before the Spring and Autumn period, as well as in the *Zhouyi* 周易 and *Shijing* 詩經, a deceased father and mother are called *zubi* 祖妣. It is from the Warring States period that *kaobi* 考妣 substituted for *zubi* 祖妣. “Yaodian” uses 考妣 which implies that “Yaodian” was compiled in the Warring States period; 5. The idea of *wuxing* 五行 (five elements) emerged in Eastern Zhou times. Correlating five elements with four directions (*sifang* 四方) and four seasons (*sishi* 四時) is an even later development. This chapter co-relates four directions and four seasons which implies that the idea of “Five elements” was very popular when this chapter was compiled. Therefore, it could not have been compiled earlier than the Warring States period; 6. Based on the constellation, this chapter can be dated to around 300 BC; 7. From 克明俊德 to 協和萬邦 in this chapter is closely related to Confucius’ idea of 修身, 齊家, 治國, 平天下. Therefore, this chapter cannot predate Confucius; 8. In this chapter, there is a line that reads “百姓如喪考妣, 三載, 四海遏密八音.” Mourning for three years was proposed by Confucius, and mentioned by Mencius. Therefore, this chapter was influenced by Confucius’ idea and it cannot predate Confucius; 9. *Mengzi* 孟子 “Wanzhang shang” 萬章上 quoted some parts of the “Yaodian” which proves that “Yaodian” predates *Mengzi*; 10. Some lines in *Chuci* 楚辭 “Tianwen” 天問 are parallel to a part of “Yaodian,” which implies that “Yaodian” existed during Qu Yuan 屈原’s (ca. 340 BC – ca. 278 BC) time. Therefore, we can presume that “Yaodian” was compiled after Confucius’ time (551-479 BC) and before Mencius was flourishing.

was compiled during Western Han times by Sima Tan 司馬談 (180 BC – ca. 110 BC) and Sima Qian 司馬遷 (145 BC – ca. 86 BC). If we follow Qu’s dating of “Yaodian” and “Gaoyao mo”, there is a gap of several hundred years between “Yaodian”/ “Gaoyao mo” and the *Shiji*. By comparing “Yaodian”/ “Gaoyao mo” and parallel passages in the *Shiji*, the differences between Warring States period grammar and Western Han grammar will emerge. In this paper, the following three differences between “Yaodian”/ “Gaoyao mo” and the *Shiji* will be pointed out:

1. The usages of personal pronouns in the *Shangshu* and the *Shiji*
2. Specifying subjects and objects in the *Shiji*
3. The emergence of 者 in the *Shiji*

## 1. The Usages of Personal Pronouns in the *Shangshu* and the *Shiji*

### 1.1. First Person

#### 1.1.1. 朕

朕 appears in both the *Shangshu* and the *Shiji*. It can be used as a first person nominative or possessive:

- 1a. 帝曰：“咨！四岳。朕[nom]在位七十載，汝能庸命。巽朕[pos]位。”（尚書/堯典 2.12）<sup>2</sup>  
The emperor said: “Oh, you Si Yue, I have been in the high position (on the throne) for seventy years. (If) you can (use=) execute (Heaven’s) mandate I shall (withdraw from, yield=) cede my high position.”<sup>3</sup>
- 1b. 堯曰：“嗟！四嶽。朕在位七十載，汝能庸命，踐朕位？”（史記/五帝本記 1.21）<sup>4</sup>

朕 is known as referring to the emperor. “Qinshihuang benji” 秦始皇本紀 in the *Shiji* explicitly indicated “天子自稱曰‘朕’.” However, there is one case in “Gaoyao mo” where it does not refer to the emperor. In the parallel passage in the *Shiji*, it is replaced by 吾:

- 2a. 皋陶曰：“朕言惠，可底行。”（尚書/皋陶謨 10.8）  
Kao Yao said: “My words are reasonable. They can be accomplished and practiced.”
- 2b. 皋陶曰：“吾言底，可行乎？”（史記/夏本紀 2.77）

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<sup>2</sup> The page number and sentence number in parenthesis refer to those in Karlgren (1950).

<sup>3</sup> The English translation of *Shangshu* is from Karlgren (1950).

<sup>4</sup> The volume number and page number in parenthesis refers to those in the *Zhonghua shuju* (1959) version.

### 1.1.2. 予

予 appears both in the *Shangshu* and in the *Shiji*. It is used as a first person nominative or possessive:

3a. 夔曰：“於. 予 [nom] 擊石拊石, 百獸率舞.” (尙書/堯典 6.35)

Kui said: “Oh, when I strike the stone, when I knock on the stone, (the hundred animals=) all the animals follow (it) and dance.”

3b. 夔曰：“於. 予擊石拊石, 百獸率舞. (史記/五帝本記 1.39)

4a. 師錫帝曰：“有鰥在下, 曰虞舜.” 帝曰：“俞. 予 [nom] 聞, 如何?” (尙書/堯典 2.12)

All (giving=) to the emperor said: “There is an unmarried man (below=) in a low position, called Shun of Yu.” The emperor said: Yes, I have heard (of him); what is he like?

The parallel line in *Shiji* has 朕 instead of 予 :

4b. 皆言於堯曰：“有矜在民間, 曰虞舜.” “然, 朕聞之. 其何如?” (史記/五帝本記 1.21)

5a. 帝曰：“疇若予 [pos]工?” (尙書/堯典 6.32)

The emperor said: “Who will (conform himself to=) carefully attend to my works?”

5b. 舜曰：“誰能馴予工?” (史記/五帝本記 1.39)

There are two examples in “Gaoyao mo” where 予 is used as a first person accusative. In the parallel line in *Shangshu*, the object is omitted:

6b. 予即辟, 女匡拂予. 女無面諛, 退而謗予. (史記/夏本紀 2.80)

6a. 予違, 汝弼[ ]. 汝無面從, 退有後言[ ]. (尙書/皋陶謨 11.3)

When I (transgress=) error, you shall assistingly correct me; you shall not to my face accord with me, and, having retired, have (other) words afterword.

Compared to the *Shangshu*, in the *Shiji* it is often the case that omitted subjects and objects are supplemented to make the grammatical relationship clearer. This will be discussed in greater detail in Part 2.

The distinction between 朕 and 予 is not clear-cut. Although 朕 is known as an emperor referring to himself, there are examples in the *Shangshu* in which it refers to someone who is not an emperor (See #2a). Also, there are many examples where 予 refers to the emperor as in 4a, 5a, and 5b above.

### 1.1.3. 余

余 appears twice in the *Shiji*. In the *Shangshu*, 予 is used instead. 予 and 余 are

graphic variants:

7b. 余欲觀古人之象。(史記/夏本紀 2.79)

7a. 予欲觀古人之象。(尚書/皋陶謨 10.12)

I desire to see the symbol (emblems) of the ancient men.

#### 1.1.4. 我

我 appears only once in the *Shangshu*. It does not appear in the *Shiji*:

8a. 帝曰：“我其試哉!”(尚書/堯典 2.12)

The emperor said: “I will try him.”

The parallel line in the *Shiji* has 吾 instead of 我:

8b. 堯曰：“吾其試哉!”(史記/五帝本紀 1.21)

#### 1.1.5. 吾

吾 appears only in the *Shiji*. There is one example where it is used as first person nominative and two examples where it is used as a first person possessive:

9b. 堯曰：“吾[nom]其試哉。”(史記/五帝本紀 1.21)

9a. 帝曰：“我其試哉。”(尚書/堯典 2.12)

The emperor said: “I will try him.”

10b. 帝曰：“道吾[pos]德，乃女功序之也。”(史記/夏本紀 2.80)

10a. 帝曰：“迪朕德，時乃功惟敘。”(尚書/皋陶謨 10.17)

The emperor said: “That they pursue the course of my virtue – it is your meritorious work that has arranged it.”

## 1.2. Second Person

### 1.2.1. 汝/女

汝 appears in the *Shangshu*. In the *Shiji*, 女, which is a graphic variant of 汝, also appears. They are used as second person nominatives or accusatives. They can also be used as second person possessives. However, usually 乃 is used as the second person possessive especially in the *Shangshu*.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> It will be discussed more in detail in 1.2.2.

- 11a. 帝曰：“咨四岳！朕在位七十載，汝 [nom]能庸命，巽朕位。”（尚書/堯典 2.12）  
 The emperor said: “Oh, you Si Yue, I have been in the high position (on the throne) for seventy years. (If) you can (use) execute (Heaven’s) mandate I shall (withdraw from, yield=) cede my high position.”
- 11b. 堯曰：“嗟！四嶽：朕在位七十載，汝能庸命，踐朕位？”（史記/五帝本記 1.21）

- 12a. 帝曰：“汝 [nom] 二十有二人，欽哉。惟時亮天功。”（尚書/堯典 6.37）  
 The emperor said: “Oh, you twenty-two men, be respectful, now you shall assist me in the great works (assigned by) Heaven.”
- 12b. 舜曰：“嗟！女二十有二人，敬哉，惟時相天事。”（史記/五帝本記 1.39）

Note that in the parallel passage in the *Shiji*, 女 appears instead of 汝.

- 13a. 帝曰：“夔，命汝 [acc]典樂，教胄子，直而溫，寬而栗，剛而無虐，簡而無傲。”（尚書/堯典 6.35）  
 The emperor said: “Kui, I charge you to be director of music, to teach the descendant sons, (to be) straight and yet mild, large-minded and yet (apprehensive=) careful, (hard=) firm and yet not tyrannical, great and yet not arrogant.”  
 [No parallel line in the *Shiji*]

### 1.2.2. 乃

In the *Shangshu* and *Shiji*, 乃 is used as a second person possessive as well as a conjunction. However, by the time of the *Shiji*, the usage of 乃 as a second person possessive was already obsolete and it was mainly used as a conjunction. The following table summarizes the usages of 乃 in the *Shangshu* and *Shiji*:

Table 1. The usages of 乃 in the *Shangshu* and *Shiji* and the number of occurrences

|                          | <i>Shangshu</i> | <i>Shiji</i>  |
|--------------------------|-----------------|---|
| Second Person Possessive | 6               | 2<br>(in two cases, 女 used instead)<br>(in two cases, no parallel line) |
| Conjunction              | 10              | 11  |

- 14a. 禹曰：“都，帝！慎乃在位，安汝止。”（尚書/皋陶謨 10.10）  
 Yu said: “Oh, emperor, be careful about your being in the (high) position.”

14b. 禹曰：“於，帝！慎乃在位，安爾止。”（史記/夏本紀 2.79）

15a. 念哉。率作興事，慎乃憲，欽哉！屢省乃成，欽哉！（尚書/皋陶謨 13.20）

Oh, think! In all actions and works initiated, carefully attend to your laws, be reverent!

15b. 念哉。率爲興事，慎乃憲，敬哉！[no parallel line]（史記/夏本紀 2.82）

16a. 禹曰：“俞，乃言底可績。”（尚書/皋陶謨 10.8）

Yu said: “Yes, your words have been accomplished and have been capable of yielding fine results.”

16b. 禹曰：“女言致可績行。”（史記/夏本紀 2.77）

### 1.3. Third Person<sup>6</sup>

#### 1.3.1. 其

There are two cases in the *Shiji* where 其 is used as a third person nominative. However, in the parallel lines in the *Shangshu*, the subject is omitted or 其人 is used instead of 其:

17a. 帝曰：“俞。予聞[ ]。[ ]如何？”（尚書/堯典 2.12）

The emperor said: “Yes, I have heard (of him); how is he like?”

17b. 堯曰：“然，朕聞之。其何如？”（史記/五帝本紀 1.21）

18a. 皋陶曰：“都。亦行有九德，亦言其人有德，乃言曰：‘載采采’。”（尚書/皋陶謨 6.3）

Gao Yao said: “Oh, in the actions there are nine virtues; when (we) say that this man has virtue, (we) (say=) mean that he initiates the various works (sc. It shows in his actions).”

18b. 皋陶曰：“然，於！亦行有九德，亦言其有德，乃言曰：‘始事事……’。”（史記/夏本紀 2.77）

Zhou Fagao (1972: 108) pointed out that 其 is occasionally used as a third person nominative in a main clause after the Liang dynasty. However, as it is shown above, there are occasional cases where 其 is used as a third person nominative as early as Western Han times.

#### 1.3.2. 之

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<sup>6</sup> Strictly speaking, the term “third person pronoun” is rather misleading. In classical Chinese, there are no real third person pronouns. Instead, demonstratives are used as third person pronouns. All third person pronouns that will be discussed in this section (其, 之, as well as 厥) were originally demonstratives.

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之 is used as a third person accusative. It appears only in the *Shiji* (six times):

19b. 帝堯者, 放勳. 其仁如天, 其知如神. 就之如日, 望之如雲. (史記/五帝本記 1.15)  
Emperor Yao is called Fang Xun. His benevolence was like the Heavens and his wisdom was like God's. When one approached him, he was like the sun. When one looked up at him, he was like a cloud.

The parallel passage in the *Shangshu* reads:

19a. 帝堯曰放勳. 欽, 明, 文, 思, 安安. (尚書/堯典 2.1)  
Emperor Yao was called Fang Xun. He was reverent, enlightened, accomplished, and sincere and peaceful (mild).

20b. 堯曰: “然, 朕聞之, 其何如?” (史記/五帝本記 1.21)  
Yao said: “It is so. I have heard of him. What is he like?”

In the parallel passage in the *Shiji*, 之 does not appear:

20a. 帝曰: “予聞[ ]. 如何?” (尚書/堯典 2.12)  
The emperor said: “Yes, I have heard (of him); how is he like?”

21b. 於是堯妻之二女, 觀其德於二女. (史記/五帝本記 1.21)  
Therefore, Yao gave him his two daughters in marriage and observed his virtue toward them.

In the parallel line in the *Shangshu*, 時 is used instead:

21a. 女于時, 觀厥刑于二女. (尚書/堯典 2.12)

22b. 堯善之, 乃使舜慎和五典. (史記/五帝本記 1.21)  
Yao considered him good, thereupon made Shun sincerely regulate five norms.  
[No parallel line in the *Shangshu*]

23b. 舜年二十以孝聞, 年三十堯舉之. (史記/五帝本記 1.21)  
Shun was renowned for his filial piety at the age of twenty. At the age of thirty, Yao hired him.  
[No parallel line in the *Shangshu*]

It is noteworthy that 之, the third person accusative, only appears in the *Shiji* and not the “Yaodian”/ “Gaoyao mo”. As will be pointed out in Part 2, the “Yaodian” often

omit subjects and objects when they are obvious, whereas the *Shiji* often specifies them for clarification. When the omitted object is specified in the *Shiji*, 之 is often used.

### 1.3.3. 厥/ 其

For the third person possessive in the *Shangshu*, 厥 appears ten times, whereas 其 only appears twice. On the other hand, in the *Shiji*, 其 appears thirteen times, while 厥 does not appear at all:

24a. 日中, 星鳥, 以殷仲春, 厥民析, 鳥獸孳尾. (尚書/堯典 2.4)

The day being of medium length and the asterism being Niao, he thereby determined mid-spring. The people disperse, the birds and beasts breed and (tail=) copulate.

24b. 日中, 星鳥, 以殷中春, 其民析, 鳥獸字微. (史記/五帝本紀 1.16)

25a. 女于時, 觀厥刑于二女. (尚書/堯典 2.12)

I will wive him, and observe his behavior towards my two daughters.

25b. 於是堯妻之二女, 觀其德於二女. (史記/五帝本紀 1.21)

Tang (1990) explained that in Zhouyuan 周原 OBI and early Western Zhou BI, 其 is only used as a modal particle and 厥 is used as a third person possessive. 其 started to substitute for 厥 and be used as a third person possessive from mid-Western Zhou times. In the Bronze Inscriptions cast in mid-Western Zhou times, 其 is used as a third person possessive in eleven out of one hundred cases. In the BI of late Western Zhou times, the percentage of 其 surged up to 49 percent. In the BI of Eastern Zhou times, the percentage of 其 is as high as 95 percent. In the manuscripts (on bamboo strips and silk) in Qin and Han times, 其 completely overtook 厥.

He further argued that the ratio of 其 and 厥 can be used as one of the criteria to date a certain text. In “Yaodian”, 其 does not appear at all. If we use the ratio of 其 and 厥 as the only criterion of dating, “Yaodian” can be dated earlier than mid-Western Zhou times, which is several hundred years earlier than Qu’s dating. Also, although 其 does not appear at all in “Yaodian” as a third person possessive, it appears in some other chapters of the *Shangshu*. Overall, it replaced 20.5 percent of occurrences of 厥 in the entire *Shangshu*. This shows that dating the *Shangshu* as well as dating individual chapters of *Shangshu* is still very controversial.

Table 2 summarizes the usages of personal pronouns in “Yaodian”/ “Gaoyao mo” in the *Shangshu* and in relevant chapters of the *Shiji* :

Table 2. Personal Pronouns in the *Shangshu* and *Shiji*

|    | First Person        |       |       | Second Person |       |                         | Third Person |       |          |
|----|---------------------|-------|-------|---------------|-------|-------------------------|--------------|-------|----------|
|    | [nom]               | [acc] | [pos] | [nom]         | [acc] | [pos]                   | [nom]        | [acc] | [pos]    |
| 尚書 | 朕予我                 |       | 朕予我   | 汝             | 汝     | 乃 6 <sup>7</sup><br>汝 2 |              |       | 厥<br>其 2 |
| 史記 | 朕予/余 <sup>8</sup> 吾 | 予     | 朕予吾   | 汝/女           | 汝/女   | 乃 2<br>女 2<br>爾 1       | 其 2          | 之     | 其        |

## 2. Specifying Subject and Object in the *Shiji*

In the *Shangshu*, subjects and objects are often omitted when they are understood by the context. In the parallel lines in the *Shiji*, they are often specified in order to make the grammatical relationships clearer:

26a. 師錫帝曰：“有鰥在下，曰虞舜。”帝曰：“俞，予聞 [obj], [subj] 如何？”(尚書/堯典 2.12)

All (giving=) to the emperor said: there is an unmarried man (below=) in a low position, called Shun of Yu. The emperor said: Yes, I have heard (of him); what is he like?

26b. 眾皆言於堯曰：“有矜在民間，曰虞舜。”堯曰：“然，朕聞之。其何如？”(史記/五帝本記 1.21)

In the *Shangshu*, the object of 聞 and the subject of 如何 do not appear. In the *Shiji*, they are supplemented.

27a. 帝曰：“欽哉！”[subj] 慎徽五典，五典可從。(尚書/堯典 2.13)

The emperor said: Be reverent! He Shun carefully (signalized=) displayed the five rules, the five rules (then) could be followed.

27b. 堯善之，乃使舜慎和五典，五典能從。(史記/五帝本記 1.21)

In the *Shangshu*, the subject of 慎徽五典 does not appear, whereas it is specified in the *Shiji*. The *Shiji* clearly shows a switch of the subject from 堯 to 舜.

<sup>7</sup> The number indicates the total number of occurrences.

<sup>8</sup> 予/余 indicates they are graphic variants.

28a. 帝曰：“臣作朕股肱耳目。予欲左右有民，汝翼[.]” (尚書/皋陶謨 10.11)

The emperor said: “My ministers (make=) are my legs and arms, ears and eyes. I desire to succor my people, do you assist (me)!”

28b. 臣作朕股肱耳目。予欲左右有民，女輔之。 (史記/夏本紀 2.79)

29a. 予違，汝弼[.] (尚書/皋陶謨 10.13)

When I (transgress=) err, you shall assistingly correct me.

29b. 予即辟，女匡拂予。 (史記/夏本紀 2.80)

In Part 1, it is pointed out that there are two cases in the *Shiji* where 其 was used as a third person nominative. Also, 之 (third person accusative), which did not appear in the *Shangshu* appeared six times in the parallel passages in the *Shiji*. The appearance of 其 and 之 in the *Shiji* is closely related to specifying subjects and objects.

In addition to specifying subjects and objects, the *Shiji* uses many other methods to make the grammatical relationship clearer and make the passage smoother. The appearance of 者 (which will be discussed in Part 3) is another device: it clearly marks nominalization. Other devices include using conjunctions (such as 乃, 於是), sentence final particles (such as 也, 矣), and so on. It is the direction of syntactic change in classical Chinese and literary Chinese (from OBI, BI to the *Shangshu* and from the *Shangshu* to the *Shiji*) to make sentences more elaborate and make the grammatical relationships more explicit.

### 3. The Appearance of 者 in the *Shiji*

者 is a nominalization marker. As Zhu (1983) pointed out, nominalization can be subdivided into two categories: self-referential (*zizhi* 自指) and transfer-referential (*zhuanzhi* 轉指). In self-reference, the meaning does not change after nominalization (e.g. kind vs. kindness), whereas in transfer-reference, the meaning changes after nominalization (e.g. write vs. writer).

者 is not found in “Yaodian” or “Gaoyao mo”. However, it appears seven times in the corresponding chapters of the *Shiji*. It is used as self-referential twice and transfer-referential five times:

Self-referential (*zizhi* 自指): 2 occurrences

30a. 帝堯曰放勳。 (尚書/堯典 2.1)

The emperor Yao was called Fangxun.

30b. 帝堯者，放勳。 (史記/五帝本紀 1.15)

31a. [No corresponding line in the *Shangshu*]

31b. 文祖者, 堯大祖也. (史記/五帝本紀 1.22)

*Wenzu* refers to the Great Ancestor Yao.

Transfer-referential (*zhuanzhi* 轉指): 5 occurrences

32a. 帝曰: “咨! 四岳. 湯湯洪水方割, 蕩蕩懷山襄陵, 浩浩滔天, 下民其咨, 有[能俾乂]NP?” (尚書/堯典 2.11)

The emperor said: “Oh, you Si Yue, voluminously the great waters everywhere are injurious, extensively they embrace the mountains and rise above the hills, vastly they swell up to heaven. The lower people groan. Is there anybody whom I could let regulate it?”

32b. 堯又曰: “嗟! 四嶽. 湯湯洪水滔天, 浩浩懷山襄陵, 下民其憂, 有[能使治者]NP?” (史記/五帝本紀 1.20)

33a. 曰: “明[明]NP揚[側陋]NP”. (尚書/堯典 2.12)

(The emperor) said: “(Make brought=) promote one (already) (brought=) illustrious, or raise one (side-placed=) humble and mean.

33b. 堯曰: “悉舉[貴戚及疏遠隱匿者]NP”. (史記/五帝本紀 1.21)

34a. 帝曰: “疇咨若予采?” 驩兜曰: “都! 共工方鳩僝功.” (尚書/堯典 2.10)

The emperor said: Who will (conform himself to=) carefully attend to my affairs? Huan Dou said: Oh, Gong Gong (to all sides =) has accumulated and exhibited his merit everywhere.

34b. 堯又曰: “誰[可者]NP?” 驩兜曰: “共工旁聚布功, 可用.” (史記/五帝本紀 1.20)

35a. 岳曰: “[瞽]NP子. 父頑, 母嚚, 象傲, 克諧, 以孝烝烝, 又不格姦.” (尚書/堯典 2.12)

(Si) Yue said: He is the son of a blind man; his father was stupid, his mother was deceitful, (his brother) Xiang was arrogant; but he has been able to be concordant and grandly filial, he has controlled himself and not come to wickedness.

35b. 嶽曰: “[盲者]NP子. 父頑, 母嚚, 弟傲, 能和以孝, 烝烝治. 不至姦.” (史記/五帝本紀 1.21)

36a. 舜曰: “咨! 四岳! 有[能奮庸熙帝之載]NP, 使宅百揆亮采惠疇? (尚書/堯典

6.28)

Shun said: Oh, you Si Yue! Is there anyone who can start achievements and make resplendent the emperor's undertakings? I shall make him occupy (the hundred disposals=) the general management, to assist in the affairs and be kind to his (equals=) colleagues.

36b. 舜謂四嶽曰：“有[能奮庸美堯之事者]<sub>NP</sub>, 使居官相事?” (史記/五帝本記 1.38)

As mentioned above, 者 did not appear at all in “Yaodian” and “Gaoyao mo”. Then, what is the reason for its emergence in the *Shiji*? It is for emphasis or clarification of grammatical relationships. The function of the self-referential 者 is to emphasize and focus a new topic. When a new topic is introduced and defined in the *Shiji*, the form “A 者, B(也)” is often used. For instance, in example #30b 帝堯者, 放勳, 帝堯 is first introduced here and focused by adding self-referential 者. The same reasoning applies to example #31b 文祖者, 堯大祖也.

The function of the transfer-referential 者 is to make grammatical relationship clearer. Compare the way that a verb phrase is nominalized in the *Shangshu* and in the *Shiji* in example #32. In 有[能俾乂]<sub>NP</sub> in the *Shangshu*, no marker is used for nominalization, whereas in *Shiji*, 者 is used (有[能使治者]<sub>NP</sub>). By adding 者, it is clearly expressed that the verb phrase is nominalized. The same reasoning applies to examples #33b, 34b, 35b, and 36b.

#### 4. Conclusion

By comparing grammatical features of “Yaodian”/ “Gaoyao mo” and parallel passages in the *Shiji*, the differences between pre-Qin grammar and Western Han grammar emerge.

First of all, differences in the usages of personal pronouns were observed: (1) In the *Shangshu*, 朕 does not necessarily refer to the emperor. However, the *Shiji* explicitly mentioned that 朕 means the emperor referring to himself. (2) 我 in the *Shangshu* is replaced by 吾 in the *Shiji*. (3) The occurrences of 乃 [2<sup>nd</sup>][pos] are fewer in the *Shiji*; it is replaced by 汝/ 女. 乃 is mainly used as a conjunction in the *Shiji*. (4) It is noteworthy that in the *Shiji*, there are two examples where 其 is used as a third person nominative. It is believed that 其 [3<sup>rd</sup>][nom] occurred as late as the Six Dynasty period. However, it occurred as early as Western Han times. (5) In “Yaodian” 厥 is used as a third person possessive, whereas it is completely replaced by 其 in the relevant chapter of the *Shiji*.

The *Shiji* tends to specify subjects and objects that were omitted in “Yaodian”/ “Gaoyao mo”. The emergence of 其 (third person nominative) and 之 (third person accusative) in the *Shiji* is due to this specification.

者 does not appear in “Yaodian”/ “Gaoyao mo” at all, while it appears seven times in the corresponding lines in the *Shiji*. Its function is either self-referential or transfer-

referential. The function of self-referential 者 is to focus and emphasis a new topic (it often appears in the form of “A 者, B 也”), whereas the function of transfer-referential 者 is to make a grammatical relationship clearer. In other words, it clearly marks that a verb or verb phrase is nominalized.

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