

The Reflexivisation System in Archaic Chinese

— specially on the difference of the function between *Ji* and *Shen* —

Kazuyuki INOUE

0. Introduction

The relation between modern Chinese reflexive and its antecedent has attracted the attention of many grammarians, especially scholars of generative grammar since 1980's. Actually this problem is connected with some deeper problems. Solving this problem leads us not only to a more detailed describing of the rule of anaphor, but also to a better understanding of questions such as “What is the governing category of Chinese?” “What functions does reflexive have other than reflexivisation?” and so on. Of course, this problem should be considered within synchronic system first, but I think it will also provide us with some clues if we consider it diachronically.

In modern Chinese, there are two types of reflexive. One is simplex reflexive like *Ziji* 自己, *Zishen* 自身, *Benren* 本人, and *Benshen* 本身. The other is those compound forms like *Ta-Ziji* 他自己 (the pronoun reflexive compound) and *Ziji-Benshen* 自己本身. We can say that those have been derived from three types of reflexive forms in Classical Chinese, namely *Zi* 自, *Ji* 己, and *Shen* 身¹. Therefore we need to understand the difference among those three reflexives, and what system they had.

In this paper, I investigated four texts in pre-Qin Dynasty, which contain more examples of the reflexives in those, that is, *ZuoZhuan* 左傳, *MengZi* 孟子, *XunZi* 荀子, and *HanFeiZi* 韓非子. And I would like to discuss the Archaic Chinese reflexivisation system, especially the difference of the function between *Ji* and *Shen*.

1. The difference between *Zi* and *Ji*

To begin with, in the literature, the difference between *Zi* and *Ji* has been the subject of a longstanding debate so far. Briefly speaking, the main points can be summarized as below. According to the traditional grammarians²,

① *Zi* as reflexive can occur in object position as well as in subject position, but not in genitive position.

1 Faltz (1985) claims that reflexives in most languages mean body, head, or part of body. The original meaning of *Zi* is a nose, and that of *Shen* is a pregnant body, whereas *Ji* was an implement like a ruler or a tool originally.

2 For instance, see Zhou (1959), Wang (1984) and Yu (2000). Note that whether *Zi* is a reflexive or not has been problematic among Chinese grammarians so far. Yang (1992) claims that *Zi* is an adverb since it must precede the verb. Moreover Wang (1984) claims that *Zi* cannot be neither in subject position nor in object position.

- ② When *zi* occurs in an object position, it has to precede the verb which governs it, and must refer to the local subject.
- ③ *Zi* can be also used as adverb which means by oneself or on one's own.
- ④ *Ji* can occur in subject or genitive position as well as in object position. When it occurs in object position, it normally follows the verb which governs it.
- ⑤ *Ji* in an embedded clause can normally be long-distance bound.

The number of occurrences of 3 reflexives in 4 texts in Pre-Qin Dynasty Period

	<i>Zi</i> 自	<i>Ji</i> 己	<i>Shen</i> 身
Zuo Zhuan 左傳	42	77	23
Meng Zi 孟子	26	33	31
Xun Zi 荀子	33	84	60
Han Fei Zi 韓非子	96	60	90

- (1) i使人主j [失端, 東西易面而不自j知]。(韓6)
[A vassal] causes his ruler to lose the way and not to know himself even if east turns west.
- (2) 知者i使人j [知己i]。(荀29)
A clever man forces others to understand him.

For instance, *Zi* in the example (1) have the local subject “Ren Zhu” 人主 as its antecedent, which constituent commands(C-commands) reflexive *Zi*. On the other hand, *Ji* in (2) is long-distance bound beyond the governing category and can have the matrix subject, “Zhi Zhe” 知者 as its antecedent without constraint by c-command, Thus surely we can admit from the four texts that *Zi* is connected with locality.

However, we still need to examine its property. In contrast to claims made by some grammarians, *Ji* must not be necessarily long-distant bound, as the following sentences testify.

- (3) 吾i未聞 [j枉己j而正人者] 也。(孟9)
I have never heard about someone who perverted himself and reformed others.

Ji in (3) do not have the matrix subject “Wu” 吾 as its antecedent as many grammarians argued. It is bound by a local subject, someone. Although there are few examples like this in the four texts, we have to admit that *Ji* is not only a long-distant bound reflexive, but also a locally bound reflexive. Besides long-distant bound usage, the anaphora of *Ji* in a simple sentence is also problematic.

- (4) 聖人j不愛己i。(荀22)
The sage does not love himself.

(5) *i* 謀人, 人 *j* 亦謀己 *i*。 (左宣14)

If he plots against others, they will plot against him as well.

As you can see, *Ji* in (4) refers to the subject 聖人 in a simple sentence, whereas *Ji* in (5) doesn't refer to the subject, “Ren” 人. In this case, it can be interpreted that *Ji* has 3rd person individuals as the antecedent across a clausal boundary. In other words, it is bound by the remote subject pro. That is why we need to illustrate the behavior of *Ji* again apart from the claims made by the traditional grammarians.

2. The main usage of *Ji*

The most significant phenomenon of *Ji* is that it has got no antecedent in the entire sentence as below.

(6) 天下大悅而將歸己 *i*, 視天下悅而歸己 *i*, 猶草芥也, 惟舜 *i* 為然。 (孟 7)

The people of the world were delighted willing to turn to him. It was only Shun that did not care as if it was weeds and rubbish despite he saw the people being delighted.

(7) 荀寅 *i* 伐其郛, 使其徒 *j* 自北門入, 己 *i* 犯師而出。 (左哀 3)

Xun Yin attacked the enemy in the outer wall of the city. Then he forced his men to get inside from the north gate. He himself broke through the enemy forces and escaped.

Apparently *Ji* in (6) doesn't have its antecedent preceding it. We might be able to say that this is the case of backward anaphora (cataphoric). However, *Ji* in (7) is not backward anaphora at all. Since it is in the initial position of the root sentence as the subject, it cannot have its antecedent preceding it. It seems that this *Ji* behaves like a third-person pronoun. By the way, from where does it take its referent? In fact it is not the sentence, but the discourse. The central character in this discourse is XunYin 荀寅. So the reader can understand with ease that *Ji* refers to him. This fact means that the discourse grammar is as important as the sentence grammar is, when we analyze the property of *Ji*.

Therefore Wei (2004) argued that *Ji* is used to mark the central character in the discourse. Certainly the referents of *Ji* in (6) and (7) are all the central character. And according to his claim, the central character in the discourse is liable to become the matrix subject. This is why *Ji* in the embedded clause is likely to refer to the matrix subject, not the local subject.

However, I think this interpretation needs some amendments. Firstly, we can see that another reflexive is used to mark the central character in the discourse as shown below.

(8) 因 *i* 釋其耒而守株, 冀復得兔, 兔 *j* 不可復得, 而身 *i* 為宋國笑。 (韓49)

Consequently he parted with his plough, and wished to get a hare again. But he could get a hare, while he himself was laughed at by all the people in Song.

- (9) 桀
- i*
- 死於亭山, 紂
- i*
- 懸於赤旆。身
- i*
- 不先知, 人又莫之諫。(荀21)

King Jie was killed in Ting shan mountain. On the other hand King Zhou was cut off his head, which was hung on a red flag. They themselves had not predicted it, and had not had ministers who remonstrated with them.

The fable including (8) is quite well-known. The main character in this fable, namely a farmer in Song is marked by reflexive *Shen*. (9) is the same as it. Here *Shen*, not *Ji* is used to mark the main character, both Jie 桀 and Zhou 紂. If the claim by Wei (2004) is correct, *Ji*, not *Shen* should be used here. Why doesn't *Ji* occur in this sentence?

Secondly, there is a case that *Ji* refers to a character which is neither central nor prominent in the entire discourse. For instance,

- (10) 初, 楚司馬子良生子越椒
- i*
- 。 . . . 薦賈
- j*
- 爲工正, 譖子揚而殺之, 子越
- i*
- 爲令尹, 己
- j*
- 爲司馬。
-
- (左宣 4)

Formerly Ziyueshu 子越椒 was born as Ziliang's 子良 child, . . . Wei Jia became gongzheng which supervises every officers, but he killed Ziyang 子揚 by slander. Ziyue became prime minister, and he became army minister.

Ji in (10) refers to WeiJia 薦賈, but this story is about ZiYue 子越 shown in the first line. So we have to admit that the main character in this discourse is not WeiJia but ZiYue. Thus *Ji* can refer to any character actually no matter if it is the central character or not in the discourse.

Lastly, we cannot find so many examples in which *Ji* doesn't have the referent in the sentence. Particularly *Ji* which is used in an initial position such as (7) is rather rare. We can find only 17 examples in these four texts used in this paper, which makes up just 6 % of the whole examples of *Ji*. This means that sentence-free *Ji* without any antecedent is not central property of *Ji*. Of course, I admit that *Ji*'s usage of having the referent across the sentence boundary is important. However, we should think that this usage of *Ji* lies within a limited area. At least, we can point out that it is not the main usage of *Ji*.

In my view, it seems the main usage and function of *Ji* is to represent the point of view which subject of consciousness has. Nearly half of the examples of *Ji* among the 4 texts is an embedded sentence, and most of them have a tendency to co-occur with the verbs which represent consciousness and emotion of the matrix subject. (11) is the example from ZuoZ-huan.

- (11) 韓厥
- i*
- 夢子輿
- j*
- 謂己
- i*
- 曰, . . . (左成 2)

Han Jue dreamed that his father Ziyu told him that . . .

Ji in this sentence doesn't refer to the local subject, but the matrix subject which is the subject of consciousness. In ZuoZhuan, the verb like "dream" 夢 is so frequently used. And every *Ji* in the embedded clause refers to the matrix subject. Besides this, the verbs like

“think” 思 and “fear” 恐 often co-occur with a long-distant bound *Ji*, as exemplified in (12) and (13).

- (12) 逢蒙 *i* 學射於羿, 盡羿之道, *i* 思天下惟羿 *j* 為愈己 *i*。(孟 8)

Feng Meng learned archery from Yi, and completely mastered his way. He thought it was only Yi in the world that was superior to him.

- (13) 荆文王 *i* 恐其 *j* 害己 *i* 也。(韓49)

Wen Wang, the king of Jing was afraid that it would harm him.

Ji in (12) refers to the subject pro (Feng Meng). And (13) is the case that *Ji* has the matrix subject Wen Wang as its antecedent.

To my interest, the property of *Ji* that it takes the subject of consciousness as its antecedent is rather similar to that of Japanese reflexive, *Zibun* 自分³. I found that every *Ji* in the four texts were translated to *Zibun* in the Japanese translation books for them. Therefore it is not so hard for Japanese people to understand those sentences which contain *Ji* in it. Although we need to analyze the difference of property between *Ji* in Archaic Chinese and Japanese *Zibun* further, it should be noticed that the reflexives in both Japanese and Chinese represent the point of view which subject of consciousness has.

3. *Shen* as Intensifying reflexive

On the other hand, the property of another reflexive, *Shen* is different from that of *Ji*. *Shen* can be locally bound, long-distant bound and unbound. This is similar to *Ji*. But it differs in the respect that it is used under contrastive environment. *Ji* doesn't necessarily need it. In the four texts, we can find 165 examples of *Shen* having a, contrastive environment, which make up more than 80 % of the whole occurrences. *Ji* is contrasted with only Ren 人 others, whereas *Shen* is contrasted with parents, child, friend, family, the ruler, and the nation etc.

- (14) 吉 *i* 不能亢身 *i*, 焉能亢宗? (左昭 1)

I cannot protect even myself. How can I protect my relatives?

- (15) 身 *i* 為天子, 弟為匹夫, 可謂 *i* 親愛之乎? (孟 9)

He himself was the emperor, while his little brother was a commoner. So we cannot say that he (=Shun 舜) loved him.

For instance, *Shen* in (14) is contrasted with the relatives 宗, and in (15) it is contrasted with the brother. However, the more significant fact is that each referent of *Shen* is inten-

3 In respect of the relation between usage of *Zibun* and the style of address (reportive vs non-reportive), see Kuno (1972).

sified in each context. In (14), the speaker, *Ji* 吉 is intensified, and in (15), the referent, Shun 舜 is intensified more than the brother. It might be possible to assume that the very contrastive environment produces this intensity. However in my opinion, *Shen* itself brings the contrastive environment. If not, we cannot explain why so many *Shen* occur in the contrastive environment.

Actually in Archaic Chinese, *Shen* can be used to put emphasis on NP.

(16) i 予汝天下, 而殺汝身 i。(韓30)

I will give you the empire, but I will kill you.

Shen in (16) has got the usage of head bound which is similar to He himself in English. It can be illustrated this usage functions as a mark of intensification. Generally speaking, *Ji* doesn't have this usage basically. Therefore it is quite natural that *Shen* is used in the context which requires intensification. I think the comparison between *Shen* and *Ji* leads us to a better understanding of this fact.

(17) 夫越 i 雖國富兵彊, 中國之主 j 皆知 i 無益於己 j 也。(韓11)

Although Yue is so rich and its army is strong, all of the feudal lords of China know that it is of no use to them.

(18) 民 i 知誅罰 j 之皆起於身 i 也。(韓38)

The people know that all of the punishments were caused by them.

Both (17) and (18) are the embedded sentences which use the same verb, Zhi 知. And these reflexives refer to the matrix subject as a long-distant bound reflexive. But semantically these have got a different function each other. As I mentioned before, *Ji* only refers to the subject of consciousness. So in the context, there is no intensification in (17). On the other hand, in the whole context which contains *Shen* like (18), there is contrast of the ruler with the people. So this sentence means that what causes the reward and punishment towards the people lies not in the ruler, but in the people themselves. Here the people were focused obviously. Hence we can understand that *Ji* and *Shen* differ from each other essentially.

Furthermore, another different property is that *Shen* is allowed not to have overt referent in the discourse. It can access NPs that are not introduced in the discourse.

(19) 身不肖而令行者, 得助於眾也。(韓40)

It is because the lord is supported by many ministers that his orders can be obeyed despite he himself is not clever.

Shen in (19) has no antecedent in the sentence, because it is in the initial position of the sentence. Besides it, it has got no overt referent in the whole discourse. If so, why can it refer to the lord semantically? It is because the word, Ling 令, which means the order, is used here. The person proper in the situation where orders are obeyed is the lord or the ruler. So *Shen*

refers to it in the end. We can say that this usage of *Shen* is like the so-called “bridging phenomenon” in the psycholinguistic literature. As you see so far, the Archaic Chinese reflexive “*Shen*” doesn’t function as a reflexive actually, and it is not bound at all. Moreover it is entirely free in the discourse as well. If so, it might be better to analyze it as intensive pronoun which marks intensification.

4. Concluding Remarks

To summarize the main points in this paper, *Zi* in Ancient Chinese can only be locally bound, and obeys the sentence grammar, whereas both *Ji* and *Shen* can be locally bound, long-distant bound and even free in the entire sentence. They obey the discourse grammar.

The main usage of *Ji*, especially in an embedded clause is to represent the point of view, which the subject of consciousness has got. It is connected with the verbs which represent thought or emotion. On the other hand, *Shen* basically functions as an intensifying marker. It requires contrastive environment in the discourse.

References

- Dobson, W.A.C.H (1974). A Dictionary of The Chinese Particles. Toronto : University of Toronto Press
- Faltz, Leonald M. (1985). Reflexivisation : A Study in Universal Syntax. New York : Garland Publishing
- Harbsmeier, Christoph (1981). Aspect of Classical Chinese Syntax. London and Malmo : Curzon Press
- Kuno, Susumu (1972) “Pronominalisation, Reflexivisation and Direct Discourse”, *Linguistics Inquiry* 3. 161-195
- Ota, Tatsuo (1988). *Chuangokugo shi Tsuukou*. Tokyo : Hakuteisha
- Pan, Haihua (1997). Constraints on Reflexivization in Mandarin Chinese. New York : Garland Publishing
- Wang, Li (1984). *Zhongguo Yufa Lilun*. WngLi Wenji Vol.1 : Shangdong : Shangdong jiaoyu chubanshe
- Wei, Pei Quan (2004). *Han Wei Liuchao Chengdaici Yanjiu*. Taipei : The Institute of Philology
- Yang, Bojun (1992). *Gu Hanyu Yufa Ji Qi Fazhan*. Beijing : Yuwen Chubanshe
- Yu, Xian Fu. William (2000). *Chinese Reflexives*. Leuven : Peters
- Zhou, Fa Gao (1959). A Historical Grammar of Ancient Chinese, Part III Substitution. Taipei : The Institute of History And Philology

楊伯俊編著『春秋左傳注』：中華書局、1981年。
四部叢刊初篇所収、清內府藏宋刊本『孟子』。
古逸叢書所収、影宋台州本『荀子』。
四部叢刊初篇所収、清・黃丕烈校影宋乾道鈔本『韓非子』。

4 For example, (i) There was a car in front of the house. The windshield was broken. The NP the *windshield* does not refer to an explicitly introduced DR (discourse referent), but is related to the DR introduced by a *car*. See Pan (1997). According Pan’s analysis, *Benren* in Mandarin Chinese has the similar property to bridging phenomenon as well.

* This paper has been based on the presentation at The XVI Biennial Conference at University of Ljubljana, Slovenia in 2006. I would like to express my gratitude to some scholars who provided me with helpful discussion on Chinese anaphors. I especially thank Dr. Sun Lam, University of Minho (Portugal) and Dr. Wolfgang Behr, University of Ruhr (Germany) for their valuable comments on my presentation.