

A New Analysis on the Nature of *Jué* as Revealed by the Bronze Inscriptions

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Abstract

This study intends to contribute to the discussion on the nature *jué* through a detailed investigation on the syntactical, semantic and pragmatic features reflected in the Bronze Inscriptions, the earliest materials in which *jué* is attested. The present study on the Bronze data shows that although *jué* can be interpreted as referring to a third person in the majority of the examples, there are cases in which the commonly held third-person genitive pronoun interpretation fails. Not only could *jué* refer to a first or second person, there are instances in which *jué* should be interpreted as a demonstrative used to track a previously mentioned or implied referent. The new analysis based on a close reading on the surrounding discourse indicates that *jué* serves the function of tracking a referent previously mentioned or guiding the listener/reader's attention to a referent implied by the ongoing discourse or shared background knowledge. In the light of common grammaticalization paths of demonstratives, this study proposes that *jué* in origin is a demonstrative and has evolved to the stage of marking identifiability instead of deictic contrast by the Western Zhou. The demonstrative interpretation also well explains the occurrence of *jué* as an independent pronoun and an adverb in the Bronze Inscriptions.

Keywords

Bronze Inscriptions, *jué*, demonstratives, identifiability

1. Introduction

The word *jué*/**kot* 爰 is commonly considered an earlier form of the pronoun *qi* 其 in the pre-classical Chinese period.¹ Since it occurs most often as the determiner of an NP, and refers to a third person, there is a general analysis that regards *jué* as a third-person genitive pronoun with occasional demonstrative use. Such a treatment is problematic due to the following considerations. First, reference to a third person does not suffice to the categorization of third-person pronouns. More than half of the modern languages investigated by Baht (2004) are the so-called “two person languages” in which third-person pronouns and demonstratives are either identical or derivationally related. Classical Chinese, as studies by Guō (1989) and Yáo (2001) suggested, is a language that lacks a specialized third-person pronoun, and often employs demonstratives for third-person reference. Second, past studies (Schindler 1932, Karlgen 1933, Bodman 1948, Takashima 1999) have raised evidence of *jué* used for first- and second-person reference in early transmitted and excavated texts. Third, in addition to marking an NP with third-, occasionally first- and second-, person reference, *jué*, according to Hé et al. (1985: 321), has demonstrative and conjunctival uses as well. If *jué* is merely a third person genitive pronoun, it is difficult to account for its occurrence in other syntactic environments.

If *jué* is not specialized in marking third-person referents, we need to pinpoint the linguistic information marked by it and underlying all its usages. Since *jué* is mainly used to track and activate referents in discourse, it is important to take a close look at the contexts in which *jué* occurs and analyze what it really refers to in them. In this paper, we will conduct such an investigation using the bronze inscriptions (BI hereinafter) from the Western Zhou to the Warring States period, a time period when *jué* was in active use, with a special focus on the pragmatic and discourse aspects.²

¹ Unless otherwise noted, the reconstructions generally follow the Minimal OC system (OCM) in Schuessler (2007).

² The research data were primarily collected from the concordances titled “*qīngtóngqì míngwén shìwén yǐndé* 青銅器銘文釋文引得 (Index of the transcription of bronze inscriptions)” to 5,758 bronze inscriptions from the Western Zhou in Volume 1, and to 7,692 inscriptions from the Spring and Autumn and the Warring States periods in Volume 2 of the *Jīnwén yǐndé* 金文引得 (*JWYD* hereinafter). To ensure complete inclusion of all examples, my study also consulted the *Yīn Zhōu jīnwén jíchéng yǐndé* 殷周金文集成引得 [Index for collection of Shang and Zhou bronzes] (*JCYD* hereinafter), which is a concordance to the *Yīn Zhōu jīnwén jíchéng* 殷周金文集成 [Collection of Shang and Zhou bronzes] (*Jicheng* hereinafter). The transcription of inscriptions as well as the dating of bronze vessels, however, was based on various sources and studies to ensure accurate interpretation of the data.

2. Grammatical functions and pragmatic uses of *jué* in the BI

My study finds that *jué* indeed occurs predominantly before an NP in the BI. There are at least 207—out of 248—instances of *jué* at the adnominal position in the Western Zhou bronzes; and *jué* modifies an NP in all the 58 tokens from the Spring and Autumn and the Warring states periods. My discussion will concentrate on *jué* in this syntactic context, and then move to the less common case in which *jué* occurs before a VP.

2.1. NPs marked by *jué*

It is true that *jué* is often coreferential with a third-person entity in the BI. Here are several examples:

- (1) 爰事（使）季友弘以告白懋父才葬。（師旂鼎, *Jicheng* 5.2809) [Early W. Zhou]

‘Lei had his distantly related male relative Hong report (the incident) to Elder Maofu at Nai.’

- (2) 瘋曰。不（丕）顯高且（祖）亞且（祖）文考。克明季心疋尹。彝季威義。用辟先王。（瘳鐘，*Jicheng* 1.248) [Mid W. Zhou]

‘Xing said: My brilliant High Ancestor, clan branch founding ancestor, and cultivated deceased father were able to illuminate their hearts in attending administrative duties and maintained their awesome decorum, thereby serving the former kings.³

- (3) 休王易效父餅三。用乍（作）季寶尊彝。（效父簋, *Jicheng* 7.3822) [Early W. Zhou]

‘The gracious King granted Xiao Fu three pieces of metal. (Xiao Fu) used (it) to (have) his precious and honorable vessel cast.’

- (4) 遷舍寓于季邑。季逆（朔）疆眾屬田。季東疆眾散田。季南疆眾散田眾政父田。季西疆眾屬田。邦君屬付裘衛田。（五祀衛鼎, *Jicheng* 5.2832) [Mid W. Zhou]

‘(They) then marked out boundaries of the settlement (land). Its northern boundary connects to Li’s fields, its eastern boundary to San’s fields, its

³ The meaning of the graph 彝 is unclear to me. Based on the context, I translate it as ‘to maintain’.

southern boundary to the fields of San and Zhengfu, and its western boundary to the fields of Li. Li, the lord of the state, then gave the lands to Qiu.⁴

Examples (1)-(3) represent the typical contexts in which *jué* occurs in the BI. *Jué* is coreferential with a human referent mentioned previously, and the entire NP marked by *jué* normally refers to a person who has a certain social relationship with, some component or quality of, or an object under the ownership of the human referent expressed by *jué*. The referent of *jué* in (4), the land granted to Qiú, is inanimate. Nonetheless, *jué* in all the examples above shows a typical function of a third person pronoun, i.e. tracking a third person referent in discourse.

However, we also notice that *jué* is not always coreferential with a third person expression in the BI. Takashima (1999) provided examples of *jué* with first- and second-person reference. What follows is an example in which *jué* and a first-person pronoun, *zhèn* 联, are employed for the same referent:

- (5) 篤率有嗣師氏奔追戎于臯林。博戎戮。朕文母競敏篤行。休容卑心。
永襲卑身。卑克卑啻（敵）。(《集成》，Jicheng 8.4322) [Mid W. Zhou]

‘Dong led officials and commanders rush to chase the Rong people at the forests of Yu. (We) fought the Rong people at Hu. My cultivated mother is powerful and diligent. (She) makes my heart gracious and broad, and eternally cloaks my (body:) person. (Therefore,) (she) made (me) conquer my enemies.’

The narrator, Dōng, is first introduced with a proper noun, and then reactivated by the first-person *zhèn* 联, and subsequently by *jué*. Although third-person expressions in general can be used for self-designation, we have no basis to suggest a sudden switch from a first-person perspective indicated by *zhèn* to a third-person one by *jué*.

The following is an instance of *jué* with second-person reference raised by Takashima (1999):

⁴ The interpretation of *yù* 寓 (宇) as ‘demarcation lines, boundaries’ follows Táng Lán (1976).

- (6) 於乎。念止（之）。[子子孫孫定保止（之）]。毋替卽邦。（中山王鼎，*Jicheng* 5.2840) [Warring states]

‘Oh, bear this in mind! Sons’ sons and grandsons’ grandsons, forever fix (all) these in mind and maintain them. Do not neglect your state.’ (Takashima 1999: 409)

He argues that the prohibitive negative *wú* 毋 by default assigns the second-person interpretation to *jué*, and compares it with *ér* 爾 — a second-person pronoun —in a parallel sentence below:

- (7) 於乎。念止（之）。後人其用止（之）。毋忘爾邦。*Ibid.*

‘Oh! Bear this in mind! May (you) my descendants, acclaim (< lit. use) this. Be not forgetful of your state.’ (Takashima 1999: 409)

What follows is another example in which the actual reference of *jué* is first person:

- (8) 我既賣（贖）女（汝）五[夫][效]父。用匹馬束絲。限誼曰。則卑
(畀)我賞（償）馬。效[父]則卑(畀)復卽絲束。（習鼎, *Jicheng* 5.2838)
[Mid W. Zhou]

‘After I had traded a horse and a bolt of silk with you (i.e. Xian) for five men from Xiao Fu, (you,) Xian broke the agreement and said that Guo would give back the horse that I gave as payment (for the five men), and Xiaofu would give back my (?) bolt of silk.’

The “bolt of silk” was part of the payment by the narrator, who is introduced earlier with a first-person pronoun, *wǒ* 我. It is impossible to interpret the reference of *jué* here as third person. The first-person reading, however, is inaccurate as well. The phrase “*jué sīshù* 卽絲束” is obviously used to track the NP “*shūsī 束絲*” in the previous sentence. The anaphoric use of *jué* here is very typical of demonstratives, which are neutral with regard to person. A better translation, thus, would be “Xiaofu would give back that bolt of silk”. To note, the translation of *jué* as *that* is simply based on the fact that the English word *that* is deictically more neutral than *this* when used anaphorically (Strauss 1993, 2002).

Once we admit that *jué* might be neutral with regard to person, we will encounter many instances in which the demonstrative reading makes better sense than the third-person one in larger contexts. Let us discuss the following examples:

- (9) 𢂔弔休于小臣貝三朋。臣三家。對𢂔休。用乍(作)父丁𢂔彝。(易𢂔簋, *Jicheng* 7.4043) [Early W. Zhou]

‘Qian Shu granted the Little Retainer cowries numbering three double-strands and retainers numbering three households. In response to his/that (?) beneficence, (he) used (it) to (have) an honorable vessel cast for Fu Ding.’

- (10) 隹十又二年初吉丁卯。益公內(入)即金于天子。公迺出卒命。易界師永卒田滄(陰)易(陽)洛疆眾師俗父田。卒眾公出卒命井白鑿白尹氏師俗父(永孟, *Jicheng* 16.10322) [Mid W. Zhou]

‘It was in the twelfth year, first auspiciousness, and on a *dingmao* day. The Duke of Yi entered (the king’s palace) and received a charge from the Son of Heaven. Then, the Duke delivered his/that (?) charge. (On the king’s behalf) he granted Commander Yong fields on the north and south of the Luo river and fields to Commander Sufu. Those who joined the Duke in delivering his/that charge were the Elder of Xing, the Elder of Rong, Yin Shi and Shi Sufu.’

- (11) 王令同左右吳大父嗣易(場)林吳(虞)牧。自流東至于河。卒逆(朔)侄(至)于玄水。世孫孫子子左右吳大父。母女又閑。對揚天子卒休。用乍(作)朕文考中尊寶。(同簋, *Jicheng* 8.4271) [Mid W. Zhou]

‘The King charged Tong to assist the Great fu of Wu to supervise the officials in charge of agriculture, forestry, mountains and pasturage from Hu east to the (Yellow) River and north to the Dark River.⁵ For generations, your sons’ sons and grandsons’ grandsons shall aid the Great fu of Wu. Do not have any leisure. Replicating the/that beneficence of the Son of Heaven, (I had) a precious honorable vessel cast for my cultivated father Zhong.’

⁵ I follow Guō Mòruò’s (1935/1957: 86-87) interpretation that takes “易林吳牧” as “場人 ‘officers in charge of agriculture’”, “林人 ‘officers in charge of forestry’”, “虞人 ‘officers in charge of mountains’”, and “牧人 ‘officers in charge of pasturage’” respectively. The river called *xuánshuǐ* 玄水 ‘dark river’ occurs only in the Tong tureen and its lid. Guō (1935/1957: 87) identifies it as River Shēyán (奢延水) in Northern Shānxī.

In (9), both the demonstrative and the third-person pronoun reading work. *Jué* would refer to what kind of gift the Little Retainer received from his supervisor in the former reading, while to the supervisor in the latter. Therefore, the demonstrative reading would be more appropriate if the purpose of casting the bronze was to celebrate the event of receiving the gift, while the personal pronoun reading is better if the intention was to honor the person who offered such a honor. The occurrence of the word *yòng* 用 ‘use (the rewards)’ in the following sentence indicates that the event is more relevant.

In (10), “*mìng* 命 ‘command, order’” occurs three times, first by itself and twice modified by *jué*. *Jué* in the first “*jué mìng*” phrase can be interpreted as a third-person pronoun referring to the king (namely, *his order*) or as a demonstrative tracking the noun “*mìng*” (namely, *that order*). The second “*jué mìng*” phrase occurs after the appearance of several human referents, which would make the king the most distanced, thus least likely, antecedent. Moreover, the second “*jué mìng*” phrase is relatively distanced from the first mentioning of the order from the king. To activate a referent that has not been the focus for a while in discourse, based on the “activation cost” theory, a demonstrative is more likely to be employed than a third person pronoun.⁶

In (11), *jué* occurs between two NPs, i.e. “Son of Heaven” and “beneficence”. If we adopt the third-person pronoun reading, *jué* has the same anaphoric function as the English pronoun *his* in phrases like “*þe king his cnihates* (the king his knights = the king’s knights)” in Middle English. This analysis is not impossible. But, we can hardly come up with an explanation on the motivation for a language that already has the syntactic means to express the modification relationship by simply putting two nouns together to develop a new “NP₁-PRON-NP₂” structure. By analyzing *jué* as a demonstrative, we could interpret the phrase “*jué xiū*” as referring to the particular kind of favor described in the previous discourse. Thus, “天子卑休” means ‘that favor (i.e. the official appointment) of the Son of Heaven’.

While the NPs marked by *jué* in (9)-(11) refer to abstract concepts, such as orders, favors, etc., *jué* modifies a noun with more concrete meaning in the example below:

⁶ See Chafe (1987) for the “activation cost” theory.

(12) 隹十又二月既生霸丁亥。王事（使）讞（榮）穨曆令邦。乎易
繙旂。用保_于邦。(輯簋, *Jicheng* 8.4192,3) [Mid W. Zhou]

'It was in the 12th month, after the growing brightness, on a *dinghai* day. His Majesty made *Róng* go to (his/the/a?) state, in recognition of what he had gone through fulfilling his charge, and announced that chariot bells and banners be issued (to him). Use (them) to protect that state.'

Conventional interpretation would regard *jué* here as pointing to a third-person referent *Róng*. But, we can also take *jué bāng* as tracking the noun *bāng* in a previous sentence. In this reading, the state is not necessarily considered as in possession of the person *Róng*.

In addition to the neutral reference with respect to person, we also find that the use of *jué* is not limited to marking a referent mentioned previously. The referent expressed by “*jué NP*” can be something that is only relevant in some way or another with a previously mentioned referent, or even something completely new to the discourse. Let us examine the following example:

(13) 獄肇乍（作）朕文考甲公寶鼎彝。其日夙夕用卒馨香享示于卒百神。(獄
鼎, 獄簋⁷) [Mid W. Zhou]

'(I,) X (as the lineage representative) initiated the casting of a precious sacrificial vessel for my cultivated deceased father, Duke Jia. May (we) day and night use its (?) fragrance (= the fragrance of the vessel?) as sacrifice to serve my/our (?) manifold spirits.'

The connection between the “fragrant smell” and the bronze vessel is rather indirect, but still acceptable. The second *jué* in the phrase “*jué bǎi shén 卒百神*”, however, by no means can be associated with the vessel. Among the referents in the surrounding discourse, the narrator is the only possible candidate. But we do not sense that the narrator here meant to claim his or his clan's affiliation with the “manifold spirits”, and, more important, *jué* in this reading points to two different antecedents in the same sentence. This is highly unlikely. A better understanding is that *jué* marks identifiability

⁷ The rubbing and transcription are based on Wú Zhènfēng (2006). This piece is a recent finding, and not included in the *Jicheng* or the *JWYD*.

based on association, i.e. between the fragrant smell and the sacrificial vessel that produces it when in use, in the case of “季馨香”, and based on shared background knowledge, i.e. the narrator expects the reader/listener to know which spirits they worship, in the case of “季百神”. We can see that the linguistic information marked by *jué* is very similar to that of a definite article, and may be rendered with the English word *the*.

The interpretation of identifiability based on association or shared knowledge is also applicable to *jué* in (1)-(4). Additional two examples are provided below to demonstrate how this analysis works:

- (14) # 隹正月初吉癸巳。王才成周。格白取良馬乘于崩生。季貯卅田。(格伯簋, *Jicheng* 8.4262-5) [Mid W. Zhou]

‘It was in the first month, first auspiciousness, on a *guisi* day. His Majesty dwelt at Chengzhou. The Elder of Ge took a quadriga of fine horses from Pengsheng. The value (of the horses involved in this exchange) was thirty fields.’

- (15) 吳王夫差擇季吉金。自乍(作)御監(鑑)。(吳王夫差鑑, *Jicheng* 16.10294) [Spring and Autumn]

‘Fu Chai, the king of Wu, selected the solid metals, and had on his own initiative cast a basin.’

In conventional interpretation, *jué* in (14) and (15) would be understood as pointing to a third-person referent. My new proposal, however, regards *jué* as marking a referent identifiable based on the association of the exchange value with the event of trading described in the preceding sentence in (14), and based on the shared common knowledge about what kinds of metals used for casting bronzes in (15).

To sum up, the referent expressed by the “*jué NP*” phrase is always identifiable based on information provided in the preceding discourse or knowledge shared by the speaker and the listener. The linguistic information marked by adnominal *jué*, thus, is identifiability based on previous mentioning, association, and shared background knowledge, and resembles the function of definite articles.

2.2 *Jué* modifying a VP

All examples of *jué* preceding a VP are from Western Zhou bronzes. The meaning and function of *jué* in this syntactic context are ambiguous, and subject to different

interpretations. Nonetheless, I propose the following three syntactic functions: (1) pronoun, (2) sentence connective adverb, and (3) relative determinative.

I only identify one instance of pronominal *jué* occurring at the subject position:

- (16) 遷舍裘衛林晉里。獻卽佳顏林。(九年衛鼎, *Jicheng* 5.2831) [Mid W. Zhou]
 ‘(He) then gave Qiu Wei the groves of the Ni hamlet. Formerly, those were groves of Yan’s.’

Jué is used to track the NP “groves of the Ni hamlet” in the preceding sentence.

Jué can also occur as an adverb meaning “then, therefore”:

- (17) 獻東夷大反。自憲父卽殷八自征東夷。唯十又一月。遣自晝自。述東_國
 伐海眉。雩卽復歸才牧自。(小臣謙簋, *Jicheng* 8.4238, 9) [Early W. Zhou]
 ‘Previously (when) the Eastern Yi launched a large-scale rebellion, the Elder Maofu led the eight divisions of Yin troops to conduct a rectifying campaign against the Eastern Yi. In the eleventh month, they were dispatched from the encampment at Ke (?) and went along the eastern slopes to attack the seacoast. Then (they) returned to the encampment at Mu.’
- (18) 垂王既祭。卽伐東夷。才十又一月。公反自周。(保員簋, *Zhāng Guāngyù* 1991) [Early W. Zhou]
 ‘It was after His Majesty conducted the burning sacrifice. Then (they) went attacking the Eastern Yi. In the 11th month, the Duke returned from Zhou.’

Some studies (e.g. *Zhāng Yùjīn* 2004) take *jué* as a third-person pronoun serving as the subject in cases similar to (17)-(18). But, we notice that *jué* occurs in the sentence describing the last event of a sequence of actions in (17)-(18). More important, *jué* follows *yú/yuè* 雨 (于／粤), which is a conjunction ‘and’, in (17), and the adverb *ji* 既 ‘already’ occurs in the previous sentence in (18).⁸ Therefore, the adverbial reading is more plausible.

⁸ For the function of *yú* 雨 as a conjunction ‘and’ in the Shang oracle-bone language, see Takashima (1984-1985).

Nevertheless, the most common function of *jué* preceding a VP is a relative determiner. What follows is an example:

- (19) 公迺出卒命。易畀師永卒田滄（陰）易（陽）洛疆眾師俗父田。卒眾公
出卒命井（邢）白（伯），蠻（榮）白（伯），尹氏，師俗父，遣中。
(永孟, *Jicheng* 16.10322) [Mid W. Zhou]

‘Therefore, the Duke delivered his/the order. He granted Commander Yong fields on the north and south of the Luo river and fields of Commander Sufu. Those (people who) joined the Duke in delivering the order were the Elder of King, the Elder of Rong, Yinshi and Commander Sufu, and Qianzhong.’

Zhāng Yùjīn (2006: 161) regards *jué* underlined in (19) as a third person pronoun serving as the subject of the “*jué* VP” sentence. Unlike the pronominal *jué* in (16), *jué* in (19) does not point to any referent in the preceding discourse, but is rather coreferential with the NPs, which happen to be the agent of the VP, after the “*jué* VP” string. The “*jué* VP” string, thus, is in fact as an NP similar to the “VP *zhě* 者” construction in Classical Chinese. But before the emergence of the *zhě* construction, a VP can refer to the agent without any segmental pronominalization operator. VPs like “眾公出卒命”, thus, are actually NPs referring to the agent of an action. Therefore, we argue that *jué* is still adnominal. Similar analysis can be applied to many other instances of “*jué* VP” except cases like the following:

- (20) 麻自今出入敷命于外。卒非先告父匱。父匱舍命。母（毋）敢又（有）
憲敷命于外。（毛公鼎, *Jicheng* 5.2841) [Late W. Zhou]

‘From now on, (when) we dispatch and report (on the execution of) orders to and from outside (of the court), the (person who) [or: the order that] has not first reported you, Fu Yin, and received consent from you, (he [or: it]) should not dare to carry the orders [or: be carried] out.’

It is unclear to me whether the VP that follows *jué* refers to the agent or patient, but *jué* remains a determiner in either interpretation.

To sum up, most cases of “*jué* VP” in our data are actually “*jué* NP”. The only genuine instances of *jué* occurring before a VP are those found in examples like the pronominal *jué* in (16) and the adverb *jué* in (17)-(18).

3. Final remarks: the nature of *jué* from the perspective of grammaticalization

Demonstratives are expressions that can denote deictic contrasts. Applying this criterion to *jué*, we cannot establish it as a demonstrative due to the lack of the evidence of *jué* marking deictic contrast. However, synchronically, demonstratives, according to Himmelmann (1996), are frequently employed for non-deictic use in naturally occurring texts. Tao (1999), Chen Pin (2004), and Fāng Méi (2005) also reported on how *zhè* ‘this’ and *nà* ‘that’ undertake various discourse functions in addition to marking spatial contrast in modern Mandarin. Diachronically, as Diessel (1999) has described, demonstratives often evolve into other grammatical items, such as third person pronouns, relative pronouns, definite articles, etc. If *jué* has reached a rather advanced stage in its course of grammaticalization, the non-occurrence of the typical exophoric use is also understandable. With these two points in mind, we cannot rule out the possibility that *jué* was a demonstrative simply based on the non-occurrence of *jué* marking deictic contrast.

Cross-linguistic studies (Himmelmann 1996, Diessel 1999) on demonstratives show that words of this category have overlapping functions with third-person pronouns and definite articles, and are a common historical source for the latter two. Previous studies on *jué* have only focused on comparing it with third-person pronouns, but never with definite articles. Laury (1997) discovered that what played an essential role in the grammaticalization of the Finnish demonstrative *se* into a definite article is the function of marking identifiability. Our discussion on *jué* suggests that its function before an NP is exactly marking an identifiable referent based on previous mentioning, association, and shared background knowledge. This means that *jué* in the majority of its occurrence in the BI shows a typical function of a demonstrative in the ongoing process of evolving toward a definite article, rather than a third-person pronoun. Such a finding also agrees with the observation by Diessel (1999: 116ff.) that adnominal demonstratives are normally the historical source of definite articles, while pronominal demonstratives often give rise to third-person pronouns.

Last, we do find examples of the pronominal and the adverbial *jué* in Western Zhou bronzes. Both syntactic contexts are typical to demonstratives (Diessel 1999: 57 ff.). Therefore, it is also a plausible solution to analyze *jué* as a demonstrative in terms of the syntactic contexts in which it can occur.

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再探金文中“厥”的性質

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提要

本文意在通過對兩周金文中“厥”的語法、語義、語用等各方面的深入調查探討其最核心的語言學功能。研究結果指出，雖然“第三人稱領格代詞”的說法適用於大多數的例子，“厥”指向第一、二人稱的例外也存在，更重要的是，我們也發現“厥”作為指示詞復指前文提及或暗指的指稱對象的用法。通過對上下文更仔細的解讀，本文提出“厥”與人稱代詞無關，其最核心的功能是用來標記可通過語篇或者背景知識來確定的指稱對象，即用來標記“可辨識性 (identifiability)”。基於對語法化路徑的了解，本文提出“厥”最早應為指示詞，而金文中的“厥”呈現的是其語法化至僅用於標記“可辨識性”的一個階段（即成為冠詞的前一個階段）。

關鍵詞

金文，厥，指示詞，可辨識性