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Barbara Meisterernst
Humboldt-University, Berlin
Email: bmeisterernst@gmail.com

Vernacular elements and Literary language in Han period Chinese: A linguistic comparison of corresponding chapters in the *Shǐjì* and the *Hànshū*

1. Introduction

Most Chinese texts from the Classical period (5th to 2nd c. BCE) on up to the May Fourth Movement in 1919 are written in a literary language. While the language of the Classical texts – despite evidently being a variety of written Chinese – is assumed to be still relatively close to a spoken language of the time, from the Han period on the Literary language, the *wényán* 文言 or *wényán wén* 文言文, is assumed to have departed entirely from any form of a spoken language. Besides the official literature written in the *wényán wén*, new literary genres containing vernacular elements develop during the Medieval period (2nd to 13th c. CE) (PEYRAUBE 1996) under the influence of Buddhist literature; these are the so-called *biànwén* 變文 texts, a kind of folk literature. This pre-modern kind of vernacular is labelled (*gǔ*) *báihuà* (古)白話 (e.g. MAIR 1994) and is considered the earliest variety of vernacular language in written Chinese. However, in this paper some arguments will be provided that even during the Han period vernacular elements can be traced in Chinese literature, e.g. in the first historiography, the *Shǐjì* (around 100 BCE), the language of which differs considerably from that of the first dynastic history, the *Hànshū* (1st c. CE). The obvious differences in language – among other things – particularly in parallel passages of the *Shǐjì* and the *Hànshū*, have led some scholars to the assumption that some of the chapters of the *Shǐjì* were composed much later than the main corpus of the text.¹ The debate on the authenticity of the *Shǐjì* has particularly concentrated on chapter 123 ‘The memoir of Dayuan’, parallels of which appear mainly in chapter 61 and 96 of the *Hànshū*; but other chapters have also been discussed.² Arguments for the authenticity of *Shǐjì* 123 from a historical perspective have been provided by PULLEYBLANK (1966 and 1970) and ENOKI (1983). Contrastively, HULSEWÉ in his 1975 article – as a response to PULLEYBLANK’s articles – assumes that the present version of *Shǐjì* 123 was composed between 100 and 400 CE on the basis of the *Hànshū* chapters dealing with the same topics. Some of his main arguments are based on the linguistic differences between the *Shǐjì* and the *Hànshū* versions. According to him the *Shǐjì* version is characterised by ‘unnecessary’ elucidations and redundancies “elements that have been added by the person or persons who centuries later constructed the present 123rd chapter ... [to the *Hànshū* version]” (HULSEWÉ 1975, p. 89) often resulting in ‘bad grammar’.³ Parts of his

¹ This argument is based on the fact that the *Shǐjì* was abridged in the first century CE (see LÜ 1995, p. 53) leaving only a fifth of the original text intact and the assumption that the present version of the *Shǐjì* was restored on the basis of the *Hànshū*. However, LÜ argues that an “original or nearly original text” of the *Shǐjì* must have been extant at the time (LÜ 1995, p. 54).

² Discussions on the transition and the authenticity of the *Shǐjì* have a long tradition among Chinese and Western scholars and are not confined to chapter 123. One of the most important contributions, and the basis of much subsequent discussion, was provided by the Chinese scholar Cui Shi 崔適 (1852-1924) who doubted the authenticity of a number of chapters of the present version of the *Shǐjì*; one of these is chapter 123 (see KERN 2003, LÜ 1995). Particular discussions have been presented on the authenticity of chapter 110, the *Xiōngnú lièzhuàn* (HONEY 1999), chapter 117, The Sima Xiangru biography (HERVOUET 1974, KERN 2003), and others, and a number of studies has been devoted particularly to the authenticity of chapter 123 (see LÜ 1995, KERN 2003).

³ HONEY 1999, p. 77 provides several arguments for the development of mistakes in the transmission of texts, e.g. based on Paul MAAS who points out that the important factor of ‘lectio difficilior’ helps explain what kind of

arguments have already been refuted in LÜ (1995) from a philological perspective. LÜ demonstrates for a few of the phrases which are analysed by HULSEWÉ as particular additions by the supposed compilers of *Shǐjì* 123 to the *Hànshū* version that they actually appear throughout the entire text of the *Shǐjì* and accordingly cannot serve as an argument for a later composition of one particular chapter of this text.

Shǐjì 123 will also be taken as a starting point in the present discussion which will review the arguments presented in LÜ; more data to his approach will be added and analysed from a linguistic perspective. It will be hypothesized that what is labelled ‘bad grammar’, ‘ungrammatical’, etc. in HULSEWÉ, since it differs from the more concise style of the *Hànshū*, can in fact in many cases be proven to be characteristic for the language of the entire text of the *Shǐjì* and can possibly be regarded as traces of a colloquial language.

2. Colloquial and written language

In his 1994 article Victor MAIR argues for a distinction of the Literary and the Vernacular Languages from a very early time on; they have been “distinct systems as far back as they can be traced” (MAIR 1994, p. 708). This distinction has according to him not only to be made from the late Warring States period on, but the Literary language (*LS* = Literary Sinitic in his terminology) most likely already existed in the oracle bone inscriptions and “was always so drastically abbreviated and so replete with obligatory nonvernacular conventions used only in writing that it never came close to reflecting any contemporary living variety of Sinitic speech” (MAIR, *ibidem*). Still, during its history the system of the written Chinese language diverged more and more from the spoken language. Other authors have supported this view on the Chinese language. However, as an argument for a different position MAIR quotes MEI Tsu-Lin (1992) who assumes that e.g. the so called fusion words or ‘allegro forms’ (see e.g. DOBSON 1959, p. 95)) provide some evidence for the hypothesis that the *Analects*, i.e. the language of Confucius and his disciples, reflect – at least partly – a colloquial language of the time (MAIR 1994, p. 709).⁴ Nevertheless, although MAIR (*ibidem*) admits that the *Analects* are more vernacular than e.g. the *Zuǒzhuan*, and both more vernacular than the Bronze inscriptions, he still claims that the classical literature, including the *Analects* and the *Zuozhuan*, is evidently quite distinct from the spoken language which shows a higher degree of polysyllabicity, different grammatical structures (e.g. the employment of the copula *shì* 是, demonstrative pronouns, classifiers) etc. However, MAIR concedes (1994, p. 710) that some vernacular elements can be traced in the first historiography, the *Shǐjì*, such as the employment of *shì* 是 as a copula: “[The *Shǐjì*] which ... has a tendency to admit a few discernable elements from VS [Vernacular Sinitic], includes a number of instances in which A *shih* B and AB *yeh* are combined ...” That the *Shǐjì* displays a particular style different from e.g. that of the *Hànshū* has continually been noted throughout history from the early commentators on. In HU Yinglin 胡應麟 (1551-1602), for instance, Sima Qian’s style is described as follows (translation from LÜ 1995, p. 67),

“In his narration, Tzu-ch’ang [Sima Ch’ien] is free and his heart is like a galloping horse, thus his wording is more superfluous and confused, Although we can regard his writing as more redundant than Mang-chien’s [Pan Ku], he is superior to Meng-chien because of his free and galloping style. Meng-chien meant to trim off redundancies so that his wording is less superfluous and branched. Although we can regard his writing

mistakes “are likely to occur on psychological grounds” (cf. HONEY *ibidem*). Additionally, HONEY (*ibidem*) refers to a suggestion by the Ming scholar WANG Ming-sheng (1722-1798) “that in the course of transmission by copying, a text (his example is the Han-shu) is naturally changed according to the interpretation of the readership, who render it progressively more “common and transparent”.” As examples of scholars who employed these principles in the literature HONEY refers to A. F. P. HULSEWÉ and William BOLTZ.

⁴ MAIR quotes only unpublished sources for MEI’s argument.

as terser than Tzu-ch'ang, his style is inferior to Tzu-ch'ang's precisely because he trims off redundancies.”

and KERN 2003, p. 306 characterises Sima Qian as one of the “stylistically most accomplished authors of his time”.⁵

In judging the different styles of the authors of the *Shǐjì* and the *Hànshū*, two strategies are possible. The first one has been employed by those authors who argue against the authenticity of the *Shǐjì*, e.g. by HULSEWÉ. It is based on the general principle of text criticism *difficilior lectio potior* (REYNOLDS and WILSON 1991, p. 199, cf. LÜ; the entire explanation is quoted in HONEY 1999, p. 76) meaning that later copyists and scribes tend to simplify and clarify a passage and that accordingly the more difficult passage is assumed to be the original version. A similar line of argument is followed by the “philological principle of *brevior lectio potior* (“the shorter reading is to be preferred”)” (KERN 2003, p. 315).⁶ In parallel passages in the *Shǐjì* and the *Hànshū* both principles have been used as an argument for the authenticity of the shorter versions attested in *Hànshū* which then were assumed to have served as a basis for the later compilation of the respective *Shǐjì* chapters. On the other hand this argumentation is not necessarily conclusive,⁷ if one assumes that the ‘clearer’, i.e. more explicit style of the *Shǐjì*, which is not confined to the chapters presumably copied from the *Hànshū* at a later point of time, provides evidence for a different and possibly more vernacular style in which the text in its entirety was composed.⁸ As the following criteria established for a distinction between the written and the spoken language by HALLIDAY (cf. SNOW 2004, p. 21) demonstrate, a less explicit and less grammatically complex style characterises the spoken form of a language:

- “- The written form is generally more grammatically complex than its spoken form.
- The written language is ‘lexically denser’ than the spoken in that it contains a higher percentage of content words.
- The written forms of languages generally do not represent rhythm, intonation, degree of loudness, variation in voice quality (“tamber”), pausing, and phrasing.
- Written language contains features such as capitalization, periods, brackets, and so forth that lack corresponding features in the spoken language.” (HALLIDAY 1989).

Only the first two characteristics are relevant in the present discussion. Both of them argue for the status of the *Hànshū* as less colloquial than the *Shǐjì*. Although this line of argumentation provides some evidence for the higher degree of colloquialism in the *Shǐjì*, it does not provide any evidence for the priority of either the *Shǐjì* or the *Hànshū*; it could, on the contrary, even support HULSEWÉ’s theory of the later composition of a text in a less refined language. However, as the following discussion will demonstrate HULSEWÉ’s claim of the priority of the *Hànshū* can be refuted from a linguistic perspective in many points following LÜ’s defence of the originality of at least chapter 123 of the *Shǐjì* and adding a number of additional arguments.

⁵ These are only a very few of an impressive number of commentaries on the writings of Sima Qian.

⁶ KERN in his argument refers to BODDE 1938 “Derk Bodde, briefly comparing certain syntactic structures in the Sima Xiangru narrative of Shiji and Hanshu, has shown that the Shiji text actually improves on that of the Hanshu, often clarifying a matter by some longer, less ambiguous phrasing.” As BODDE concludes, “this is exactly what we would expect if we supposed that the Ch’ien Han Shu biography was written first, and then copied from there into the Shih Chi. It is hardly conceivable that the reverse of such a process could have occurred.””

⁷ However KERN provides some conclusive arguments against the authenticity of chapter 117.

⁸ See HONEY 1999, p. 72 referring to SHI Ding 施丁 (1982) who compares the different styles of the *Shǐjì* and the *Hànshū*: “His interest was in the difference in diction between the two authors. He concluded that Pan Ku deleted the prolix prose of Ssu-ma Ch’ien, and thus sacrificed much of the Shih-chi’s vivid rhetorical effect, the richness of its content, and the historical accuracy of the vernacular vocabulary preserved in the Shih-chi.” Additionally he quotes XU Fuguan 徐復觀 who “had expressed similar views, providing Pan Ku with a motivation for writing in a more abbreviated, terse style than Ssu-ma Ch’ien: Pan Ku desired to link his history to the tradition of the Shang-shu (hence the use of the term shu in his title).”

3. Linguistic difference in parallel sections in the *Shǐjì* and the *Hànshū* with particular regard to *Shǐjì* 123

In the following section grammatical variants between the *Shǐjì* (*SJ*) and the *Hànshū* (*HS*) on the basis of the parallel chapters *SJ* 123 and *HS* 61, and 96, will be discussed. Lexical and graphic variants are not at issue in this study. The study follows LÜ's argumentation and adds more data which will be discussed from a linguistic perspective. LÜ 1995, p. 61 points out three criteria to investigate the grammatical arguments presented in HULSEWÉ:

“1) Is it necessary that the more terse phrase must be the earlier grammatical usage? Is it possible that a “redundant” phrase in the *Shih chi* serves a different function or carries a different meaning from its “more terse form,” though later they might have the same meaning? 2) Are the grammatical usage and functions of the phrases in *Shih chi* 123 consistent with other parts of the *Shih chi*? If they are consistent throughout *Shih chi*, 123 alone cannot be regarded as inauthentic unless the entire work is proven so. 3) Which is more likely the case, that anachronism or different writing styles has caused different wording in the two works?”

In the following discussion particularly point 1) and 2) will be at issue. The study will concentrate only on a few lexical items most of which have been used by Hulsewé to argue against the authenticity of the *Shǐjì*; these are the expression of temporality; however, additionally a few other grammatical features will be discussed briefly.

3.1 Temporal adverbials

In this section temporal adverbials which include both point of time adverbials and aspecto-temporal adverbs as they appear in *Shǐjì* 123 and have been discussed by HULSEWÉ, together with their respective variants in the *Hànshū* will be at issue.

a) *Shì shí* 是時 ‘at this time’ versus *shì* 時 ‘at the time’

The correspondence of the two phrases *shì shí* 是時 versus *shí* 時 has already been discussed in LÜ 1995, and the examples presented there will not be repeated here. LÜ demonstrates that besides the instances in chapter 123, *shì shí* 是時 equally appears in the pre-Qin chapters of the *Shǐjì* which cannot have been reconstructed from the *Hànshū*; additionally he shows that e.g. in chapter 7 of the *Shǐjì* the employment of *shì shí* 是時 is consistent, whereas it is inconsistent in the corresponding chapter *Hànshū* 31 which has both *shí* 時 on its own and *shì shí* 是時 in those parallel cases where *Shǐjì* consistently has *shì shí* 是時. However, the argument from HE Leshi which LÜ 1995, p. 63 presents as evidence for a difference in meaning of *shì* 是 and *shì shí* 是時 is not valid in this context, since it concerns *shí* 時 in preverbal position in the meaning ‘daily’, ‘regularly’ which is different from *shí* 時 in sentence-initial position in the meaning ‘at the time’, as in the examples discussed in LÜ. *Shí* 時 in preverbal position belongs to the class of aspecto-temporal adverbs, expressing predominantly aspectual notions (in this case habituality), confined to this position, whereas in sentence-initial position, it belongs to the class of temporal adverbials which always indicate a point of time ‘at the time’. These adverbs are less confined in their position than aspecto-temporal adverbs, but they appear always above aspecto-temporal adverbs.

As the following examples will show, a similar situation to the one described for *shì shí* 是時 by LÜ in the *Shǐjì* and the *Hànshū* can be observed with the employment of other temporal adverbials.

b) *Qí hòu* 其後 + temporal NP ‘after that X time’

The structure *hòu* 後 + temporal NP and its variants has been discussed comprehensively in MEISTERERNST (2010), different realisations of this structure are attested in the Han period

literature, of which only the structure *qí* 其 + *hòu* 後 + NP_{temp} will be considered in this context; this structure is characterised by the employment of the anaphoric pronouns *qí* 其 or *shì* 是 preceding *hòu* 後.⁹ The pronoun *qí* 其 has two different functions which are relevant in this context: 1), its function as a possessive pronoun ‘its/his/her/their’ which is the Classical function of *qí* 其,¹⁰ and 2), its function as a long distance demonstrative pronoun which becomes only relevant from the Han period on (*Gǔdài Hànyǔ xūcí cídiǎn* 2000, p. 406). Of both structures the latter one as a long distance pronoun – corresponding to the shorter distance pronoun *shì* 是 – seems to be more conclusive in this context. Additionally, temporal adverbials with *qí* 其 including those with *hòu* 後 are almost non-existent in Classical texts and only become more frequent in the Han period texts *Shǐjì* 史記 and *Hànshū* 漢書.¹¹ According to the functional difference between the two demonstrative pronouns, the temporal adverbials with *qí* 其 apparently imply a greater distance to *situation time* and *reference time* than those with *shì* 是 ‘this’; they are usually confined to past contexts similar to *na* 那 ‘that’ which, as CHAO 1968, p. 544 states, “usually, though not necessarily, refers to the past”.¹² Since in a narrative text both temporal adverbials – those modified by *shì* 是 and those modified by *qí* 其 – refer to past contexts most of the time, possibly the pronoun employed serves - in a subtle way – to elucidate the viewpoint of the author of the narrative and accordingly *speech time* (MEISTERERNST 2010). Two instances of the structure *qí* *hòu* + NP_{temp} are attested in chapter 123 with the variant *hòu* 後 + NP_{temp}. HULSEWÉ refers to the *Shǐjì* variants as cases of “‘additions’ and ‘clarifications’ compared to the *Han shu* version” which are “therefore considered as the product of an author who used the *Han shu* version to construct his text” (HULSEWÉ 1975, p. 100).¹³

(1a) 其後二年，漢擊走單于於幕北。 *Shǐjì*: 123, 3167

Qí hòu èr nián, Hàn jī zǒu chányú yú mù běi

That HOU two year, Han attack run Chanyu at desert north

‘Two years after that, Han attacked and caused the Chanyu to flee north to the desert.’

(1b) 後二年，漢擊走單于於幕北。 *Hànshū*: 61, 2691

Hòu èr nián, Hàn jī zǒu chányú yú mù běi

HOU two year, Han attack run Chanyu at desert north

‘Two years later, Han attacked and caused the Chanyu to flee north to the desert.’

(2a) 其後歲餘，騫所遣使通大夏之屬者皆頗與其人俱來， *Shǐjì*: 123, 3169

Qí hòu suì yú, Qiān suǒ qiǎn shǐ tōng Dàxià zhī shǔ zhě jiē pō

That HOU year rest, Qian REL send envoy communicate Daxia SUB attached REL all quite

yǔ qí rén jū lái

with their people together come

‘More than a year after that, all the envoys who Qian had sent to communicate with Daxia and the attached countries, returned together with their people [people from these countries], ...’

⁹ Of the two variants, the one with *qí* 其 is more frequent than the one with *shì* 是.

¹⁰ In HE Leshi et al. it is analysed as indicating a subordinate relation 表示領屬關係. In combination with positional words (方位詞) it indicates a positional relation.

¹¹ A few instances of *qí* *hòu* 其後 are attested in the *Zhànguó cè* 戰國策, but other temporal adverbials with *qí* 其, such as e.g. *qí* *shí* 其時 do not occur either in the *Zuǒ zhuàn* 左傳 where only one instance of *qí* *míng yuè* 其明月 ‘the next month of that’ is attested (*Zuǒ*: B10.7.9./339/16) (MEISTERERNST 2010).

¹² See also MEISTERERNST 2004, p. 230.

¹³ The distinction between *hòu* 後 + NP_{temp} and *qí* *hòu* 其後 + NP_{temp} has been discussed comprehensively in MEISTERERNST 2010.

(2b) 後歲餘，其所遣副使通大夏之屬者皆頗與其人俱來， *Hànshū*: 61, 2693
Hòu suì yú, qí suǒ qiǎn fù shì tōng Dàxià zhī shǔ zhě
 HOU year rest, its REL send assist envoy communicate Daxia SUB attached REL all quite
 ‘More than a year later, all the assisting envoys who Qian had sent to communicate with
 Daxia and the attached countries, ...’

More instances of this variation between *Shǐjì* and *Hànshū* are attested in other chapters.

(3) 其後四歲，廣以衛尉爲將軍，出鴈門擊匈奴。 *SJ*: 109, 2870
Qí hòu sì suì, Guǎng yǐ wèiwèi wéi jiàngjūn, chū Yànmén jī
 That HOU four year, Guang with colonel-of-the-guard make general, go-out Yanmen attack
Xiōngnú
 Xiongnu
 ‘Four years after that, Guang, the commandant of the guards became general, and he left
 Yanmen to attack the Xiongnu.’¹⁴

In this case, *Hànshū*: 54, 2443 again has *hòu sì suì* 後四歲 ‘four years later’; the rest of the sentence is identical. The same variation appears in *SJ*:110, 2881 and *HS*:94A; 3746,¹⁵ the *Xiōngnú lièzhuàn*, the authenticity of which has been questioned in HONEY 1999. However, the *Shǐjì* and *Hànshū* versions of the *Xiōngnú lièzhuàn* contain three parallel instances which show an identical phrasing with regard to the temporal adverbial.

(4) 其後三百有餘歲，戎狄攻大王亶父， *SJ*:110, 2881
Qí hòu sān bǎi yòu yú suì, Róng Dí gōng dà wáng Dǎnfù
 That HOU three hundred and rest year, Rong Di attack great king Danfu
 ‘More than three hundred years after that the Rong and the Di attacked the Great King
 Danfu.’

The *Hànshū* version of this passage (*Hànshū*:94A; 3744) is identical except for *tài* 太 instead of *dà* 大. Two more identical instances of *qí hòu* + NP_{temp} appear in *Shǐjì*: 110, 2881 and *Hànshū*:94A, 3744. Both instances are almost entirely identical in both versions.

(5) 其後百有餘歲 *SJ*:110, 2881, *HS*: 94A, 3744
Qí hòu bǎi yòu yú suì
 That HOU hundred and more year
 ‘More than a hundred years after that ...’

(6) 其後二百有餘年 *SJ*:110, 2881, *HS*: 94A, 3744
Qí hòu èr bǎi yòu yú nián
 That HOU two hundred and more year
 ‘More than two hundred years after that ...’

The construction in *Shǐjì* is by no means confined to the chapters quoted above, but is also attested in the *Shū* 書 and other chapters, even in the *Shì* 世 chapters.

The following is a list of all instances of the construction *qí hòu* + NP_{temp} in the *Shǐjì*.

¹⁴ The translation differs from the one in MEISTERER NST 2010, ex.20 which did not account for the historical context (see *SJ*:22; 1135). However, the translation presented here does not follow WATSON 1993, II, p. 120 or NIENHAUSER *et al.* (2011: 214) who both chose a passive translation.

¹⁵ *Qí hòu sìshísì nián* 其後四十四年 *SJ*:110; 2881 versus *hòu sìshísì nián* 後四十四年 *HS*:94A; 3746.

Qí hòu 其後 in *Shǐjì* and *Hànshū*

<i>Shǐjì</i>	<i>Hànshū</i>
12, 485: 其後五年	25B, 1247: 其後五年
12, 485: 其後十二歲	
28, 1358: 其後十六年	25A, 1194: 其後十四年
28, 1360: 其後 (★六■) 【四】年	25A, 1196: 後四年
28, 1360: 其後十四年	
28, 1363: 其後百有餘年	
28, 1364: 其後百餘年	
28, 1365: 其後百二十歲	
28, 1366: 其後百一十五年	
28, 1380: 其後二歲	25A, 1211: 其後二歲
28, 1389: 其後三年	25A, 1221: 後三年
28, 1401: 其後二歲	
28, 1403: 其後五年	25B, 1247: 其後五年
29, 1409: 其後四十有餘年	
30, 1422: 其後四年	
30, 1434: 其後二歲	24B, 1196: 其後二歲
41, 1745: 其後四年	
44, 1837: 其後十四歲	
57, 2074: 其後九歲	
66, 2178: 其後四年	
66, 2178: 其後五年	
66, 2179: 其後四年	
66, 2181: 其後二年	
66, 2182: 其後四歲	
70, 2284: 其後二年	
80, 2436: 其後二十餘年	
81, 2450: 其後十餘歲	
83, 2465: 其後二十餘年	
86, 2616: 其後百六十有七年	
86, 2519: 其後七十餘年	
86, 2522: 其後四十餘年	
105, 2797: 其後五日	
109, 2870: 其後四歲	54, 2443: 後四歲
110, 2881: 其後三百有餘歲	94A, 3744: 其後三百有餘歲
110, 2881: 其後百有餘歲	94A, 3744: 其後百有餘歲
110, 2881: 其後二百有餘年	94A, 3744: 其後二百有餘年
110, 2881: 其後四十四年	94A, 3746: 後四十四年
110, 2881: 其後二十有餘年	

111, 2940: 其後四年	
123, 3167: 其後二年	61, 2691: 後二年
123, 3169: 其後歲餘	61, 2693: 後歲餘
126, 3202: 其後二百餘年	
126, 3207: 其後一歲	

Of the 43 instances in the *Shǐjì* of *qí hòu* 其後 + NP_{temp} only fourteen have a parallel in the *Hànshū*: eight of them with the same construction as in the *Shǐjì*, i.e. with *qí* 其 preceding *hòu* 後, and in six of them *qí* 其 is omitted. Independently of the *Shǐjì* the structure *qí hòu* + NP_{temp} is only once attested in the *Hànshū*, in *Hànshū*: 94B, 3296.

The following two belong to those examples which do not have a parallel in the *Hànshū*; however, example (8) has a parallel in the *Lùnhéng*.

(7) 其後四年，越復伐吳。 SJ:41, 1745

Qí hòu sì nián, Yuè fù fá Wú
That HOU four year, Yue again attack Wu
'Four years after that Yue attacked Wu again.'

(8) 其後九歲而君餓死。 SJ:57, 2074

Qí hòu jiǔ suì ér jūn è sǐ
That HOU nine year CON prince hungry die
'Nine years after that you will die of starvation.'

This passage is quoted in *Lùnhéng* 11.10.8. However, it is not the only instance of this construction in the *Lùnhéng*. The fact that quotations from the *Shǐjì* 史記 appear in the *Lùnhéng* has also been acknowledged by HULSEWÉ 1975, p. 86 who takes these correspondences as an upper limit for the time when the present chapter 123 might have been compiled.

The construction is quite infrequent in *Hòu Hànshū* and extremely rare in *Sānguó zhì* (1 instance, with *shì* 世 'generation' which is not a real NP_{temp}). The examples unambiguously demonstrate that the construction *qí hòu* 其後 + NP_{temp} is attested in the entire corpus of the *Shǐjì*, although not in all singular chapters, and can certainly be considered typical for this text. The subtle difference between *hòu* 後 and *qí hòu* 其後 might have been overlooked in most cases by Ban Gu in favour of a more concise and 'Classical' expression.¹⁶

c) *ránhòu nǎi* 然後乃 'then afterwards'

Often the above discussed adverb *hòu* 後 appears in combination with *rán* 然: *rán hòu* 然後 'afterwards', 'thereupon (and not before that)' (TLS, accessed 08.08.2011), or with *ér* 而: *ér hòu* 而後 'later, thereafter, afterwards' 'thereupon and not before that' (TLS, accessed 08.08.2011). When *hòu* 後 is employed on its own, both the sentence-initial and the preverbal position are available for it, whereas in combination with *rán* 然 (and with *ér* 而) it mostly appears as a sentential adverb in sentence-initial position (MEISTERERNST 2010). In the construction at issue here the temporal adverbial *ránhòu* 然後, often employed as a temporal conjunction, is combined with the conjunctive adverbial *nǎi* 乃 'then, thereupon'.

¹⁶ The structure is with only a few instances in the *Zhànguó cè* and in the *Lyǔshì chūnqīū* extremely rare in Classical texts (MEISTERERNST 2010).

According to HULSEWÉ 1975, p. 106 the addition of *nǎi* 乃 following *ránhòu* 然後 is grammatically bad and betrays “a poor understanding of the *HS* text”.

(9a) 「必先納聘，然後乃遣女。」 SJ:123, 3170
Bì xiān nà pìng, ránhòu nǎi qiǎn nǚ
MUST first bring.in betrothal.gift, afterwards then send girl
‘They must first bring us the betrothal gifts and only then will we send the girl.’

(9b) ...然後遣女。 HS:96B, 3903
ránhòu qiǎn nǚ
afterwards send girl

LÜ discusses the variant *ránhòu nǎi* 然後乃 briefly as the last of the grammatical constructions he presents in favour of his argument for the authenticity of chapter 123 of the *Shǐjì*. He provides one example for it from *Hànshū* 92, which shows a parallel to *Shǐjì* 124, and comments “It does not matter whether we like or dislike the expression *jan-hou nai*; what is important is that the author of *Han shu* accepts it. Here, at least, he would disagree with HULSEWÉ that it was “bad grammar””.

Anyway, with only three instances of this combination in the *Shǐjì* but eight in the *Hànshū*, *ránhòu* 然後 and *ránhòu nǎi* 然後乃 are actually more frequently attested in the *Hànshū* than in the *Shǐjì*.¹⁷ However, *ránhòu nǎi* 然後乃 is also attested occasionally in the *Lǐjì*, the *Lǎozǐ*, and the *Zhànguó cè*. Additionally, there are some examples in the *Lùnhéng*, and in the post-Han literature, most frequently in the *Sānguó zhì*.

(10a) 請西約三晉，南連齊、楚，北講於單于，然後乃可圖也。 Zhànguó cè 440/214/26
Qǐng xī yuē Sān Jìn, nán lián Qí, Chǔ, běi jiǎng yú Chányú,
Ask west contract Three Jin, south connect Qi, Chu, north contract PREP Chanyu,
ránhòu nǎi kě tú yě
afterwards then can plan FIN

‘I ask you to make a contract with the Three Jin in the west, to connect yourself with Qi and Chu in the south, the make peace with the Chanyu in the north, and only then can it be planned.’

The same instance also appears in the *Shǐjì* with the variant *qí hòu nǎi* 其後乃:

(10b) 請西約三晉，南連齊、楚，北購於單于，其後迺可圖也。 SJ:86, 2529
Qǐng xī yuē Sān Jìn, nán lián Qí, Chǔ, běi gòu yú Chányú,
Ask west contract Three Jin, south connect Qi, Chu, north contract PREP Chanyu,
qí hòu nǎi kě tú yě
that after then can plan FIN

‘I ask you to make a contract with the Three Jin in the west, to connect yourself with Qi and Chu in the south, the make peace with the Chanyu in the north, and only then can it be planned.’

This is one of two instances of *qí hòu nǎi* 其後迺/乃 in the *Shǐjì*; the second one appears in the variant *qí hòu nǎi* 其後乃 in *SJ*:16, 759. Both variants are in general rare and are not attested in the *Hànshū*. This, together with the examples presented above of *qí hòu* 其後,

¹⁷ *Ránhòu* 然後 is attested 168x in the *HS*, and 84x in the *SJ*.

leads to the assumption that combinations with the pronoun *qí* 其 seem to be typical for the language of *Sīmǎ Qiān* and might display traces of colloquialism.

The following examples represent another instance of a temporal adverb with *hòu* 後 in a parallel instance in *Shǐjì* 123 and *Hànshū* 61 which demonstrates that in general the *Shǐjì* is more explicit in its formulations. In this example the temporal adverbial *shì hòu* 是後 which is structurally identical with the above discussed *qí hòu* 其後 is entirely omitted in the *Hànshū*.

(11a) 是後天子數問騫大夏之屬 · SJ:123, 3168

Shì hòu tiānzǐ shuò wèn Qiān Dàxià zhī shǔ

This after emperor often ask Qian Daxia SUB member

‘After this, the emperor often asked Qian about all those that belonged to Daxia.’

(11b) 天子數問騫大夏之屬 · HS:61, 2691

Tiānzǐ shuò wèn Qiān Dàxià zhī shǔ

Emperor often ask Qian Daxia SUB member

‘The emperor often asked Qian about all those that belonged to Daxia.’

d) *yúshì nǎi* 於是乃 ‘thereupon’

The combination *yúshì* 於是 ‘then, thereupon’ is already attested as a prepositional phrase referring to a point of time in the Classical literature, i.e. in Late Archaic Chinese. It grammaticalises into a conjunctive temporal adverbial ‘thereupon, hence’ which expresses temporal and logical sequence.¹⁸ In this function it is frequently attested in the *Shǐjì*. In the instances discussed, it combines with the semantically similar sentential adverb *nǎi* 乃 forming a complex conjunction (*Gǔdài Hànyǔ xūcí cídiǎn* 2000., p. 780). With regard to this combination in the following instance HULSEWÉ 1975, p. 120 remarks “乃 is redundant after 於是; it is a typical SC addition”.

(12a) 宛王城中無井，皆汲城外流水，於是乃遣水工徙其城下水空以空其城 ·

SJ:123, 3176

Yuǎn wáng chéng zhōng wú jǐng, jiē jí chéng wài liú shuǐ, yúshì

Yuan king city middle not.have well, all draw.water city outside float water, thereupon

nǎi qiǎn shuǐ gōng xǐ qí chéng xià shuǐ kōng yǐ kōng qí chéng

then send water worker move its city under water empty in.order to empty its city

‘In the capital city of Dayuan there were no wells, they drew all the water from outside the city; thereupon he sent water workers to move the water channels below the city in order to dry that city.’

(12b) 於是遣水工徙其城下水空以穴其城。 HS:61, 2700

yúshì qiǎn shuǐ gōng xǐ qí chéng xià shuǐ kōng yǐ xué qí chéng

thereupon send water worker move its city under water empty in.order to hole its city

‘...thereupon he sent water workers to move the water channels below the city in order to dry that city.’

As the meticulous comparison of LÜ 1995, p. 63f demonstrates, in some cases, *yúshì nǎi* 於是乃 regularly corresponds to *yúshì* 於是 in *Hànshū*, and in one case to *nǎi* 乃; in other instances, both *Shǐjì* and *Hànshū* show *yúshì nǎi* 於是乃. In general the adverbial *yúshì* 於是

¹⁸ The earliest instance quoted for this function in the *Gǔdài Hànyǔ xūcí cídiǎn* 2000, p. 779 is from the *Zhuāngzǐ*.

is frequently attested in both the *Shǐjì* and the *Hànshū*; the combination with *nǎi* 乃 is less frequent; however, there appear considerably more instances of it in the *Shǐjì* than in the *Hànshū*.¹⁹ In the *Shǐjì*, 17,3 % of all the instances of *yúshì* 於是 are followed by *nǎi* 乃 either directly or following the subject-NP, whereas in the *Hànshū* only 6,7 % of all instances combine with *nǎi* 乃. The combination *yúshì nǎi* 於是乃 is also attested in the *Zhànguó cè*, *Hán Fēi zǐ*, *Lǚshì chūnqiū*, *Guǎnzǐ*, and the *Huái nán zǐ*; however, it is not attested in the *Lùnhéng*. The following example is from the *Zhànguó cè*. The instance is also recorded in the *Shǐjì*, but without the introductory adverbial.

(13a) 於是乃以車三百乘入朝灑池，割河間以事秦。 *Zhànguó cè* 220/116/11
Yúshì nǎi yǐ chē sān bǎi shèng rù cháo Mǐnchí,
 Thereupon then with carriage three hundred carriage present court Minchi,
gē Héjiàn yǐ shì Qín
 cut.off Hejian in.order.to serve Qin
 ‘Thereupon he paid his homage at the court in Minchi with three-hundred carriages, and he cut off Hejian in order to serve Qin.’

(13b) 趙入朝灑池，割河間以事秦。 *SJ*:70, 2295
Zhào rù cháo Mǐnchí, gē Héjiàn yǐ shì Qín
 Zhao present court Minchi, cut.off Hejian in.order.to serve Qin
 ‘Zhao paid his homage at the court in Minchi, and it cut off Hejian in order to serve Qin.’

In the *Hànshū* there are 19 instances of *yúshì nǎi* (not including the instances of *yúshì* 於是 NP_{Subj} *nǎi* 乃); of these, nine instances do not have a correspondence in the *Shǐjì*; in one case *Shǐjì* has *yīn* 因 ‘then’, where *Hànshū* has *yúshì nǎi* 於是乃.²⁰ One of these instances from the *Shǐjì* (chapter 91) is quoted below.

(14a) 於是酒使人入九江。 *SJ*:91, 2602
Yúshì nǎi shǐ rén rù Jiǔjiāng
 Thereupon then send man enter Jiujiang
 ‘Thereupon he sent someone to enter Jiujiang.’

(14b) 於是乃使人之九江。 *HS*:34, 1886
Yúshì nǎi shǐ rén zhī Jiǔjiāng
 Thereupon then send man to.to Jiujiang
 ‘Thereupon he sent someone to go to Jiujiang.’

¹⁹ In the *Shǐjì* there are altogether 849, and in the *Hànshū* 631 instances of *yúshì* 於是. *Yúshì nǎi* 於是乃/酒 is altogether 147 times attested in the *Shǐjì* (13 of these show the variant 酒), and in *Hànshū*, it is 42 times attested, of these total numbers, the NP_{Subj} appears 87 times between *yúshì* 於是 and *nǎi* 乃 in the *Shǐjì*, and 23 times in the *Hànshū*.

²⁰ The following list excludes those cases in which the subject NP appears between *yúshì* 於是 and *nǎi* 乃 (see also Lü 1995, p. 65). *HS*:21A, 975, in *SJ*:26, 1260: 因; *HS*:23, 1089, not in *SJ*; *HS*:25A, 1233 and *SJ*:28, 1397; *HS*:33, 1852, in *SJ*:94; 2649 於是酒; *HS*:34, 1886 and *SJ*:91, 2602; *HS*:35, 1907 and *SJ*:106, 2825; *HS*:38, 1997, not in *SJ*; *HS*:39, 2009 and *SJ*:53, 2016; *HS*:39, 2013, not in *SJ*; *HS*:40, 2049, not in *SJ*; *HS*:41, 2075 (Lü’s edition has *nǎi* 酒) and *SJ*:95, 2662; *HS*:42, 2378, not in *SJ*; *HS*:57A, 2542 and *SJ*:117, 3002 (adverbial identical, rest different); *HS*:57B, 2583 and *SJ*:117, 3049; *HS*:63, 3124, not in *SJ*; *HS*:87A, 3523, not in *SJ*; *HS*:97A, 3944 and *SJ*:49, 1974; *HS*:97A, 1969, not in *SJ*; *HS*:99B, 4113, not in *SJ*. The 23 instances of *yúshì* 於是 NP_{Subj} *nǎi* 乃 have not been checked for possible correspondences in the *Shǐjì*; however, two of these are quoted in Lü 1995, p. 65.

The considerable number of instances of *yúshì nǎi* 於是乃 in the *Shǐjì* evidently demonstrates that although it is far from being confined to the *Shǐjì*, it certainly is typical for this text. Many of the instances of *yúshì nǎi* 於是乃 in the *Hànshū* have a correspondence in the *Shǐjì*; and the correspondences are by no means restricted to chapters which have been supposed to be recomposed on the basis of the *Hànshū*.

e) Aspecto-temporal adverbs

The adverbials discussed above all belong to the class of sentential adverbs which, as circumstantial adverbials, are less confined in their syntactic position than genuine adverbs, i.e. the aspecto-temporal adverbs discussed below. Whereas circumstantial adverbials frequently, but not exclusively, appear in topic, i.e. sentence-initial position, aspecto-temporal adverbs are confined to preverbal position.

First, the combination *sù* 素 ... *rì jiǔ* 日久 will be discussed. The adverb *sù* 素 ‘habitually’ indicates that a situation begins in the past and continues up to speech time (Meisterernst, ms.); accordingly it expresses a particular kind of habitual aspect. It is in general not very frequent, but in altogether three instances in the *Shǐjì* it is attested in combination with the duration phrase *rì jiǔ* 日久 ‘days are long’, which semantically harmonizes with adverbs expressing habituality. Additionally to the instances in the *Shǐjì*, the combination is twice attested in the *Lùnhéng* (1st c. CE), but it never occurs in the *Hànshū*. This combination in *Shǐjì* 123 has been commented on by HULSEWÉ who notes (HULSEWÉ 1975, p. 105): “They contain grammatical monstrosities like ..., where 素 “of old” is combined with 日久矣, ...”.

(15a) ... 素服屬匈奴日久矣， ... SJ:123, 3169

Sù fúshǔ Xiōngnú rì jiǔ yǐ,
Constantly submit Xiongnu day long FIN, ...

‘that they were submitted to the Xiongnu is for a long time now, ...’

(15b) ... 又近匈奴，服屬日久， HS: 96B, 3902

yòu jìn Xiōngnú, fúshǔ rì jiǔ,
Additionally close Xiongnu, submit day long,

‘additionally they were close to the Xiongnu, and submitted to them for a long time, ...’

However, as already mentioned, the combination of *sù* 素 and the temporal predicate *rì jiǔ* 日久, although it is infrequent, is not unique in the *Shǐjì*, as the following example demonstrates; the only difference between the following examples and example (15a) is its lack of the sentence final particle *yǐ* 矣.

(16) 彼趙高素諛日久，今事急，亦恐二世誅之。 SJ:7, 308

Bǐ Zhào Gāo sù yú rì jiǔ, jīn shì jí, yì kǒng Èrshì zhū zhī
That Zhao Gao habitually flatter day long, now affair urgent, also fear Ershi execute OBJ

‘It is for a long time now that this Zhao Gao has flattered [the emperor], now since matters have become urgent, he fears that the Erh shi will execute him.’

(17) 聖人脩身正行，素禱之日久， Lùnhéng 19.17.12

Shèng rén xiū shēn zhèng xíng, sù dǎo zhī rì jiǔ
Wise man cultivate body rectify conduct, habitually pray SUB day long

‘The sage cultivated himself and rectified his conduct, and the days when he used to pray are long [gone].’

In the post Han literature, a combination of another habitual adverb of Han period Chinese, the adverb *cháng* 常 ‘habitually’, appears in the same combination with *rì jiǔ* and, although *cháng* 常 is regularly attested in the Classical and Han period literature, this combination seems to be exclusively, though infrequently, attested in the post-Han literature. The adverb *cháng* 常 ‘habitually’ indicates habituality, duration or frequency. It is independent of the time of reference, i.e. it can be employed in past, present or future tense contexts, which are occasionally overtly marked for temporal reference by additional adverbials indicating a point of time. In general, *cháng* 常 is best qualified as an adverb which expresses habituality independent of a temporal location of the situation (MEISTERERNST, ms.); and identical to *sù* 素 it harmonizes well with a duration phrase such as *rì jiǔ* 日久.

(18) 凡天下 所以不理者，常由人主承平日久， *Hòu Hànshū*: 52, 1725
Fán tiānxià suǒ yǐ bù lǐ zhě, cháng yóu rénzhǔ chéng píng
 Altogether empire REL with NEG in.order REL, always come.from ruler peaceful
rì jiǔ
 day long
 ‘Altogether, the reason for an empire to be in disorder always results from a ruler who’s days of peace last too long, ...’

The following example represents a typical employment of the habitual adverb *cháng* 常 in the *Shǐjì*; however, it is omitted in the *Hànshū* version.²¹ Additionally, instead of the two disyllabic verbs in the *Shǐjì* variant of this passage, monosyllabic verbs appear in the *Hànshū*. Both features evidently argue for a higher degree of colloquialism in the *Shǐjì* than in the *Hànshū*.²²

(19a) 月氏遁逃而常怨仇匈奴，無與共擊之。 *SJ*:123, 3157
Yuèzhī dùn táo ér cháng yuàn qiú Xiōngnú, wú yǔ gòng
 Yuezhi withdraw flee CON constantly resent be.hostile Xiongnu, not.have with together
jī zhī
 attack OBJ
 ‘The Yuezhi fled and always resented the Xiongnu and were hostile to them, but they did not have anyone together with whom they could have attacked them.’

(19b) 月氏遁而怨匈奴，無與共擊之。 *HS*:61, 2687
Yuèzhī dùn ér yuàn Xiōngnú, wú yǔ gòng jī zhī
 Yuezhi withdraw CON resent Xiongnu, not.have with together attack OBJ
 ‘The Yuezhi withdrew and resented the Xiongnu, but they did not have anyone together with whom they could have attacked them.’

In the next group of examples the adverb *wǎngwǎng* 往往 is at issue. According to its regular position *wǎngwǎng* 往往 obviously belongs to the same class of aspecto-temporal adverbs as the adverbs *sù* 素 and *cháng* 常. Identically to these adverbs, it usually appears in preverbal position and is separable from the verb only by particular syntactic elements. It has a locative function ‘everywhere’, and the derived senses ‘universally’, and ‘habitually’ (*Gǔdài Hànyǔ xūcí cídiǎn* 2000, p. 590). It is also attested in later (post Han) texts. In the following variants in the *Shǐjì* and the *Hànshū*, *wǎngwǎng* 往往 appears in two different positions; of these the

²¹ The correspondences of *cháng* 常 in the *Shǐjì* and the *Hànshū* are not studied systemically in this paper.

²² See MAIR 1994, p. 709 quoted above.

position in the *Shǐjì* seems to be irregular. Regarding this example, HULSEWÉ 1975, p. 97 simply notes that *Hànshū* inverts the order of the *Shǐjì* variant.

(20a) 無大 (★王■) 【君】長，往往城邑置小長。 SJ:123, 3164
Wú dà jūn zhǎng, wǎngwǎng chéng yì zhì xiǎo zhǎng
Not.have great ruler chief, habitually city town employ small chief
'They do not have great rulers and chiefs, and usually they employ small chiefs in the cities and towns.'

(20b) 大夏本無大君長，城邑往往置小長， HS:96A, 3891
Dàxià běn wú dà jūn zhǎng, chéng yì wǎngwǎng zhì xiǎo zhǎng
Daxia originally not.have great ruler chief, city town habitually employ small chief
'Daxia (Bactria) originally did not have great rulers and chiefs, and the cities and towns usually employed small chiefs.'

The *Hànshū* variant displays the regular position of *wǎngwǎng* 往往 as an aspecto-temporal adverb which by default appears in preverbal position, whereas in the *Shǐjì* it seems to occur in sentence-initial position. The following two examples on the one hand support the analysis of *wǎngwǎng* 往往 as an aspecto-temporal adverb confined to preverbal position, and on the other hand they demonstrate that in the *Shǐjì*, too, it in general appears in its default position. In example (21) it follows the modal adverbs *gù* 固 'certainly' – aspecto-temporal adverbs always appear below modal adverbs in the adverbial hierarchy –, and in example (22) it follows the quantifiers *jiē* 皆 'all', and *gè* 各 'each'.

(21) 嶺難沙北固往往出鹽，大體如此矣。 SJ:129, 3269
Lǐngnán, shā běi gù wǎngwǎng chū yán, dà tí rú cǐ yǐ
Lingnan, desert north certainly habitually produce salt, in.general be.like this FIN
'Lingnan and [the area] north of the desert have certainly always produced salt, and on the whole it is the same.'

(22) 至長老皆各往往稱黃帝、堯、舜之處， SJ:1, 46
Zhì zhǎng lǎo jiē gè wǎngwǎng chēng Huángdì, Yáo, Shùn zhī chǔ
Arrive chief elder all each frequently mention Huangdi, Yao, Shun SUB place
'When I arrived the chiefs and elders each always pointed out to me the sites of Huangdi, Yao, and Shun.'

With regard to the regular position of *wǎngwǎng* 往往 in examples (21) and (22), an analysis different from that of the *Hànshū* variant has to be assumed for the variant in the *Shǐjì*. According to this analysis, which is represented by the translation in example (20a), *chéng yì* 城邑 'cities and towns' does not refer to the subject, but actually has to be analysed as a locative adjunct (with a deleted preposition) in preverbal position following the aspecto-temporal adverb. This position is the regular position for prepositional phrases (both arguments and adjuncts) in Han period Chinese. The adjunct has been misinterpreted by the author of the *HS* who corrects what he assumes to be the irregular position of *wǎngwǎng* 往往.

The examples presented so far may serve as another argument for the authenticity of *Shǐjì* 123; however, they may predominantly serve as some evidence for the particular language of the *Shǐjì* which in general tends to express grammatical functions more explicitly and accordingly displays many apparent 'redundancies' in comparison with the *Hànshū* in its marking of grammatical categories such as tense or aspect, but also in its employment of conjunctions

and other form words. As the examples have demonstrated, firstly, none of the constructions is confined to the one chapter 123 in the *Shǐjì* (at issue in HULSEWÉ), but they are attested throughout the entire text of the *Shǐjì*, often even in all the different sections of the text, and secondly, they are actually not always redundant, but simply more explicit and precise than the respective *Hànshū* variants; this is e.g. particularly obvious in the case of the temporal adverbial *qí hòu* 其後, but also in the case of the aspecto-temporal adverb *sù* 素. In this regard, the language of the *Shǐjì* differs from the Classical language on the one hand, (which still might have had some remnants of a morphology), and the later *wényán* literature obviously modelled on the Classical language; both the Classical language and the *wényán* are much more concise in their employment of grammatical markers than the language of the *Shǐjì*, i.e. they are both grammatically more complex and lexically denser than the language of the *Shǐjì*, both characteristics which distinguish the written from the spoken language.

3.2 Miscellaneous grammatical features

In this section a few more grammatical features will be touched upon to provide more evidence for the linguistic differences between the *Shǐjì* and the *Hànshū*. The first feature discussed is the employment of attributive *tuō* 他 ‘another, other’. *Tuō* 他 ‘other’ which develops into the third person pronoun *tā* 他 of Modern Mandarin is already attested in the *Shǐjīng* as a modifier of a subject or object NP ‘other, another’ and as an independent noun ‘the other’ in different kinds of NPs, i.e. subject NPs, object NPs, double object constructions, as complement of a preposition, etc. In example (23a) it appears as the first of two modifiers in a double object construction, in (23b) it is missing. HULSEWÉ 1975, p. 103 presents this instance as another ungrammaticality introduced by the author of chapter 123 of the *Shǐjì*: “In line 69 *SC* replaces the more archaic 鉅 by the unequivocal 巨 and, most ungrammatically, elucidates 旁 by means of 他 ... the *SC* reading is a laborious and tortuous attempt to make sense of an evidently corrupt version.”

(23a) 多持節副使道，可使，使遣之他旁國。
SJ:123, 3168²³
Duō chí jié fù shǐ dào kě shǐ, shǐ wèi zhī tā páng guó
 Many take credential assist envoy road can send, send send OBJ other side country
 ‘Many receive the imperial credentials to be sent on the road as assistant envoys, and if they can be sent, he sends them to other neighbouring states.’

(23b) 多持節副使，道可便遣之旁國。
HS:61, 2692
Duō chí jié fù shǐ, dào kě biàn qiǎn zhī páng guó
 Many take credential assist envoy, road can then send OBJ side country
 ‘Many receive the imperial credentials and assist the envoys; and if the road is suitable, then he sends them to the neighbouring states.’

However, this is not the only instance in which *tuō* 他 appears as the first of two modifiers of a NP, a fact which argues for the grammaticality of its employment in the example quoted by HULSEWÉ.

(24a) 梁王怨袁盎及議臣，乃與羊勝、公孫詭之屬陰使人刺殺袁盎及他議臣十餘人。
SJ:58, 2085
Liáng wáng yuàn Yuán Àng jí chén, nǎi yǔ Yáng Shēng, Gōngsūn Guǐ zhī
 Liang king angry Yuan Ang critical minister, then with Yang Sheng Gongsun Gui SUB

²³ Change of punctuation of the *Shǐjì* edition.

shǔ yīn shǐ rén cì shā Yuán Ang jí tuō yì chén shí yú rén
 group secretly send man stab kill Yuan Ang and other critical minister ten more man
 ‘Liang wang was angry with Yuan Ang and the critical ministers; together with the group of Yang Sheng and Gongsun Gui he thereupon sent someone secretly to kill Yang Ang and more than ten of the other critical ministers.’

The *Hànshū* parallel of this example is almost entirely identical to the *Shǐjì* version, it merely adds the verb *móu* 謀 ‘plan, scheme’, and it retains *tuō* 他. The employment of *tuō* 他 as the modifier of an already modified NP is also – even if only rarely – attested in later historiographical texts, there is no reason at all to assume it ungrammatical. The modifier *tuō* 他 is quite regularly attested e.g. in the *Hòu Hànshū*, in the *Sānguó zhì*, etc., but usually it does not appear in combination with another modifier. So, in this case, it may have been added by Sīmǎ Qiān in order to provide more emphasis.

(24b) 乃與羊勝、公孫詭之屬謀，陰使人刺殺爰盎及他議臣十餘人。HS:47, 2210
Nǎi yǔ Yáng Shēng, Gōngsūn Guǐ zhī shǔ móu, yīn shǐ rén cì shā
 then with Yang Sheng Gongsun Gui SUB group plan, secretly send man stab kill
Yuán Ang jí tuō yì chén shí yú rén
 Yuan Ang and other critical minister ten more man
 ‘He then plotted with the group of Yang Sheng and Gongsun Gui and secretly sent someone to kill Yang Ang and more than ten of the other critical ministers.’

In the following example *dà* 大 ‘great’ modifies the complex NP *tóng sù* 同俗; this again is considered to be not very elegant by HULSEWÉ 1975, p. 94.

(25a) 奄蔡在康居西北可二千里，行國，與康居大同俗。控弦者十餘萬。臨大澤，無崖，蓋乃北海云。SJ:123, 3161
Yǎncài zài Kāngqú xī běi kě èr qiān lǐ, xíng guó, yǔ Kāngqú dà
 Yancai be.at Kangqu west north can two thousand li, nomadic country, with Kangqu great
tóng sù. Kòngxián zhě shí yǔ wàn. Lín dà zé, wú yái,
 same custom. Bowmen NOM ten more ten.thousand. Close great marsh, not.have bank,
gài nǎi běi hǎi yún
 namely then north sea FIN
 ‘Yancai is around two thousand miles northwest of Kangqu, it is a nomadic country, and has to a great extent the same customs as Kangqu. The[ir] bowmen are several ten thousand. It is close to the great marsh without banks, this is actually the so-called ‘northern sea’, then.’

(25b) 其康居西北可二千里，有奄蔡國。控弦者十餘萬 (大)【人】。與康居同俗。臨大澤，無崖，蓋北海云。HS:96A, 3893
Qí Kāngqú xī běi kě èr qiān lǐ, yǒu Yǎncài guó. Kòngxián zhě
 That Kangqu west north can two thousand li, there.is Yancai country. Bowmen NOM
shí yǔ wàn rén. Yǔ Kāngqú tóng sù Lín dà zé, wú yái,
 ten more ten.thousand man. With Kangqu same custom. Close great marsh, not.have bank,
gài běi hǎi yún
 namely north sea FIN
 ‘Around two thousand miles to the northwest of that Kangqu, there is the country Yancai. The[ir] bowmen are several ten thousand men. It has the same customs as Kangqu. It is close to the great marsh without banks, this is actually called ‘northern sea’.’

This passage shows several differences between the *Shǐjì* and the *Hànshū* versions which are commented on by HULSEWÉ 1975, p. 94. The first is the combination *gài nǎi* 蓋乃, in which according to HULSEWÉ “the word “presumably” *kai* 蓋 is followed in a most ungrammatical fashion by the explanatory *nai* 乃.” Regarding this combination, it can be observed that it is indeed not attested in other Han period texts, but e.g. in the *Sānguó zhì* and other later texts. Without the other evidence presented in this paper, this might be considered to be an argument in favour of HULSEWÉ’s theory of a later composition of *SJ*: 123, but according to the general evidence presented here, the combination *gài nǎi* 蓋乃 might rather be considered to be another possible trace of the colloquial language in the *Shǐjì*. However, the phrase *dà tóng sù* 大同俗 ‘greatly same customs’ which according to HULSEWÉ 1975, p. 95 is employed in a ‘non-elegant’ way to deal with a corrupt passage in *HS* does occur more frequently in the *Shǐjì* (whereas it is not attested at all in the *Hànshū*). The same holds true for the phrase *kòngxián zhě* 控弦者 followed by a numeral NP without the head noun *rén* 人. With regard to the phrase *dà tong sù* ‘greatly same custom’, another almost parallel passage in *Shǐjì* 123 and *Hànshū* 94 is presented in the following example; in this example in the *Hànshū* version adverbial *dà* 大 modifies *tóng* 同 and *sù* 俗 is omitted. In both examples (25) and (26) the NP *tóng sù* 同俗 ‘same custom’, identical to *tong* 同 ‘same’, is employed as the predicate of the sentence, *dà* 大 occurs in its frequently attested function as a manner adverb. In example (27) the phrase *dà tong sù* 大同俗 appears in another chapter of the *Shǐjì* and does not have a parallel in the *Hànshū*.

(26a) 自大宛以西至安息，國雖頗異言，然大同俗，相知言。 *SJ*:123, 3174

Zì Dǎyuǎn yǐ xī zhì Anxí, guó suī pō yì yán, rán dà tóng sù, xiāng zhī yán
From Dayuan CON west to Anxi, country although quite different speech, but great same custom, mutually know speak

‘From Dayuan to the west up to Anxi, although the countries have quite different languages, they have to a great extent the same customs, and can talk to each other.’

(26b) 自宛以西至安息國，雖頗異言，然大同，自相曉知也。 *HS*:96A, 3896a1

Zì Yuǎn yǐ xī zhì Anxí, guó suī pō yì yán, rán dà tóng, zì xiāng xiǎo zhī
From Dayuan CON west to Anxi, country although quite different speech, but great same, self mutually understand know

‘From Dayuan to the west up to Anxi, although the countries have quite different languages, they are to a great extent identical, and understand and know each other.’

(27) 與江南大同俗，而楊越多焉。 *SJ*:129, 3268

Yǔ Jiāngnán dà tóng sù ér Yángyuè duō yán
With Jiangnan great same custom, CON Yangyue many there.in

‘.. to a great extent they have the same customs with Jiangnan and there are many Yangyue there.’

According to the Acadimia Sinica database, the phrase *dà tóng sù* is only attested in the *Shǐjì* and can accordingly be considered typical for Sīmǎ Qiān’s language.

4. Conclusion

The examples discussed here represent only a small number of the grammatical variants relevant in a comprehensive comparison of the *Shǐjì* and the *Hànshū*; lexical variants which

also would have to be included in a study on colloquialisms have been almost entirely omitted. As a first and preliminary result it can be stated that the data evidently does not support the hypothesis that chapter 123 is a later addition to the *Shǐjì*, as a lost chapter rewritten on the basis of the *Hànshū*. As has been demonstrated, the linguistic features studied are not merely typical for this chapter, or confined to those chapters which have been assumed to be later additions, but they are characteristic for the entire corpus of the *Shǐjì*. Accordingly they can be considered to be representations of the language typical for the author of the *Shǐjì* (in the main Sīmǎ Qiān), under the assumption that the main body of the *Shǐjì* has indeed been composed by Sīmǎ Tán and Sīmǎ Qiān during the Western Han period.²⁴ Some of the phrases which have been considered to be unnecessary and redundant additions and elucidations by HULSEWÉ are not even confined to the *Shǐjì* as e.g. the combinations *ránhòu nǎi* 然後乃 and *yúshì nǎi* 於是乃. The first of the two is – although altogether quite rare – actually more frequent in the *Hànshū* than in the *Shǐjì*, but it is also occasionally attested in other texts such as the *Lǐjì*, the *Lǎozǐ*, and the *Zhànguó cè*, whereas the latter is more frequently attested in the *Shǐjì* and obviously typical for this text. However, it is by no means unattested in the *Hànshū* and it also appears in other texts such as *Zhànguó cè*, *Hán Fēi zǐ*, *Lǚshì chūnqiū*, *Guǎnzǐ*, and the *Huái nán zǐ*. The temporal adverbial *qí hòu* + NP_{temp}, too, seems to be typical for the *Shǐjì*, although it also appears occasionally in the *Hànshū*. However, it has to be conceded that it almost always occurs in parallels to the *Shǐjì* (there is only one independent occurrence of it in the *HS*). It is also rare in the subsequent historiographical literature. Unique is the way of employment of the aspecto-temporal adverb *sù* 素 in the *Shǐjì* in comparison to the *Hànshū*; however, it is also attested in the same manner in the *Lùnhéng*. Additionally, both temporal adverbial phrases and aspecto-temporal adverbs appearing in the *Shǐjì* are occasionally omitted in the *Hànshū* in parallel passages. The data presented demonstrates that much more systematic comparison of the two texts is required to sort out and evaluate the differences between them.

The data also demonstrates that the *Shǐjì* in general is more explicit, and accordingly also occasionally more redundant in its wording which can be considered a typical characteristic of the colloquial language which generally admits e.g. more function words, redundant temporal references, more deictic expressions, etc. Nevertheless, not all of the more explicit expressions discussed in this paper really display redundancies, but also – sometimes very subtle – semantic differences. Examples for more explicit and in tendencies redundant expressions are certainly adverbial compounds such as *yúshì nǎi* 於是乃, also the explicit temporal reference of the adverbial *hòu* 後 preceded by a demonstrative such as *qí* 其 or *shì* 是, although the latter evidently display subtle differences in temporal reference and perspective on the part of the speaker. To the same category of explicit marking of temporal relations evidently belongs the employment of the aspecto-temporal adverbs *sù* 素, and possibly *cháng* 常. The phrase *dà tóng sù* 大同俗 in the *Shǐjì* might also display a higher degree of colloquialism than the corresponding phrases in the *Hànshū*, since the employment of descriptive adverbs or adjectives can often be observed in the colloquial language to create a more vivid impression; the same might account for the employment of the additional modifier *tuō* 他 in the *Shǐjì* (example (23)), to produce more emphasis and add additional deictic reference. All these particular characteristics of the *Shǐjì* are assumed to show traces of a colloquial language (many of the grammatical features appear in narrative and dialogue sections) which have been replaced in the *Hànshū* by the more ‘Classical’ features of the Literary language. However, it has to be conceded that, although many of the phrases discussed display a strong flavour of colloquialism, the language of the *Shǐjì* in its entirety can

²⁴ The question of how many chapters of the present *Shǐjì* were composed by the father Sīmǎ Tán or the son Sīmǎ Qiān will be left out in the discussion.

certainly not be regarded as reflecting any real vernacular language of the Han empire at the time, or even the standard colloquial language of the capital Chángān. The particular style of the *Shǐjì* with regard to the *Hànshū* might also be due to differences in the characters and tastes of the respective authors. Nevertheless, the *Shǐjì* certainly shows more colloquial characteristics than the later historiographies and than many other texts of the late Warring States period, and accordingly it will be hypothesized that the *Hànshū* can be considered to be the actual starting point for the *wényán* style, consciously referring back to the style of the Late Archaic, the ‘Classical’ literature, which is considered to be particularly prestigious, whereas the *Shǐjì* displays a closer relation with the spoken language of the time and seems occasionally less pretentious than the Classical style of the *Hànshū* and the subsequent *wényán* literature.

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