Answer key to exercise on tonal split

The píng tone 平聲 category in Middle Chinese developed into yīnpíng陰平(1st tone) and yángpíng 陽平(2nd tone) in Modern Standard Chinese. This phenomenon is called *píng fēn yīn yáng*平分陰陽. Please answer the following two questions.

1. What is the phonological condition that triggered this split of one category into two?

* Some characters in the píng tone category in Qieyun were pronounced with a voiceless initial, e.g. [t, th], while others were pronounced with a voiced initial, e.g. [d].
* After the Qieyun, those with the voiceless initials gradually became the yīnpíng category, and those with the voiced initials gradually became yángpíng, alongside the disappearance of the contrast between voiced and voiceless initials.

1. The following words belong to the píng tone in Middle Chinese. The Middle Chinese pronunciations are given in IPA[[1]](#footnote-1), not pinyin. According to the rule of *píng fēn yīn yáng*平分陰陽, can you indicate whether it is yīnpíng or yángpíng in Modern Standard Chinese for each word?

You can just write yīnpíng or yángpíng in the box under each word.

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| 葩pha (flower) | 檀dɑn (sandalwood) | 嵯dzɑ  ([of mountains] high) | 箄pie̯  (a fishing tool) | 櫜kɑu  (quiver) | 夔gwi  (mythical creature) |
| yīnpíng pā | yángpíng  tán | yángpíng  cuó | yīnpíng  bēi | yīnpíng  gāo | yángpíng  kuí |

1. The Middle Chinese pronunciations are based on Wang Li’s system from Guo (1986) ［郭锡良1986 《汉字古音手册》，北京大学出版社］ [↑](#footnote-ref-1)