Answer key to exercises on tonal development 2

Look at the following words in Middle Chinese. They are all from the píng平 tone category[[1]](#footnote-1).

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 端straight | 團round | 湯soup | 溏pond | 歸return | 葵sunflower |
| tuɑn | duɑn | thɑŋ | dɑŋ | kwe̯i | gwi |

1. How is each pair of initials different in terms of their phonetic features?

The first one in each pair has a voiceless initial; the second one has a voiced initial.

1. Can you predict their tonal categories in Modern Standard Chinese?

The first one would belong to the yīnpíng category and the second one would belong to the yángpíng category in each pair.

1. What is your justification?

According to the tonal development phenomenon, those with a voiced initial in Middle Chinese developed into the yángpíng in Modern Standard Chinese if it had a ping tone in Middle Chinese, and the ones with voiceless initials became yīnpíng.

1. The rimes of these characters have not changed much from Middle Chinese to Modern Standard Chinese. Can you figure out their current pronunciations? Please indicate them by pinyin.

duān tuán tāng táng guī kuí

Note here the pinyin letters d and g are unaspirated voiceless consonants, i.e. [t] and [k] in IPA. They are not voiced consonants.

1. What is your justification?

Alongside the tonal splits as mentioned above, the voiced initials in Middle Chinese also became aspirated voiceless consonants in the píng tone category.

1. What is the rule of thumb for the change from voiced stops in Middle Chinese to Modern Mandarin Chinese?

The voiced stops in Middle Chinese became aspirated voiceless in the píng tone category and unaspirated voiceless otherwise.

1. What is the rule of thumb for the split of tonal categories?

Voiced initials would trigger the development into the yáng tones in each of the four tonal categories of Middle Chinese, while the voiceless initials would trigger the development into the yīn tones.

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)