

The Dialectal Base of the Rhyme Book *Zhongyuan Yinyun*:  
Evidence from Modern Henan Reflexes of Middle Chinese

Rusheng Words

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Abstract

Linguistic studies on the dialectal base of the rhyme book *Zhongyuan Yinyun*, compiled in the Yuan Dynasty, started from the early 20th century. Many methods have been developed since then to explore various sources of data relating to *Zhongyuan Yinyun*, though, one of the most important aspects has been ignored. That is, the modern Henan dialects, which are most likely direct descendants of the phonological system of *Zhongyuan Yinyun*, have been neglected completely. In this research, four modern Henan dialects have been investigated. By comparing the modern reflexes of the Middle Chinese *rusheng* (the entering tone) words in these dialects to the phonological categories of these *rusheng* words in *Zhongyuan Yinyun*, it is concluded that the phonological system of *Zhongyuan Yinyun* was based

on the Central Plain (including today's Henan and southern Hebei) dialects in the Song and Yuan Dynasties.

Key words: *Zhongyuan Yinyun*, Henan dialect, entering tone, phonology