

**A Study of the Categories of the *Zhao-Series* Initials of Middle
Chinese from the Perspective of the Northern Dialects**

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ABSTRACT

The present study aims at investigating the categories of the *zhao-series* initials of Middle Chinese. Particularly, the present study tries to examine whether the *zhuang-group* initials and the *zhang-group* initials should be considered belonging to one or two groups of initials, using both dialectal and historical data. The first part of the thesis is an overview on what is being said about the *zhuang-group* initials and the *zhang-group* initials in previous studies. The second part of the thesis discusses the merge and the split of the *zhuang-group* initials and the *zhang-group* initials based on their historical development and in conjunction with ancient Chinese and Modern Chinese Phonology. The third part of the thesis uses the data of the distribution of the *zhuang-group* initials and the *zhang-group* initials in present day Northern Mandarin

to discuss the categories of these two groups of initials in Middle Chinese. Combining the observations made from both dialectal data and historical studies, the conclusion of the present study is that the *zhuang-group* initials and the *zhang-group* initials should be considered belonging to two different groups of initials, which will be the fourth part of the thesis.