

# **Studies in Colloquial Chinese and Its History**

## **Dialect and Text**

Edited by Richard VanNess Simmons

Hong Kong University Press  
The University of Hong Kong  
Pokfulam Road  
Hong Kong  
<https://hkupress.hku.hk>

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ISBN 978-988-8754-09-0 (*Hardback*)

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British Library Cataloguing-in-Publication Data  
A catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library.

10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

Printed and bound by J&S Printing Co., Ltd. in Hong Kong, China

# Contents

List of Figures and Map	vii
List of Tables	viii
Acknowledgments	x
Introduction: Facets of the History of Colloquial Chinese as Reflected in the Dialects and in Texts <i>Richard VanNess Simmons</i>	1
<b>I. Chinese Dialects in Texts</b>	
1. Does Taiwanese Cantillation Reflect the Sound of the Táng? <i>David Prager Branner</i>	15
2. Vernacular Written Cantonese in the Twentieth Century: The Role of Cantonese Opera in Its Growth and Spread <i>Marjorie K. M. Chan</i>	36
3. The Mix of Dialect and Guānhuà Elements in the Wú Folk Songs Collected in Féng Mènglóng's <i>Shāngē</i> <i>SHÍ Rǔjié</i>	59
4. Changes in Language Use as Reflected in <i>Shuǐhǔ zhuàn</i> Passages Embedded in the <i>Jīn Píng Méi cíhuà</i> <i>HUÁNG Lín</i>	88
5. Wordplay in <i>Jīn Píng Méi</i> <i>ZHĀNG Huìyīng</i>	104
6. Division of Old and New Shànghǎi Dialects: A Comparative Study of <i>Tǔhuà zhǐnán</i> and <i>Huìyǔ zhǐnán</i> <i>ZHĀNG Měilán</i>	121
7. The Origin and Evolution of the Dialect Word <i>yá</i> 伢 ‘Child’ <i>NÍ Zhìjiā</i>	137

## II. Chinese Dialects and Their History

8. The Demarcation of Western Mandarin and the Designation of the Chéngdū Dialect as Its Standard Form in Modern China <i>Kengo CHIBA</i>	153
9. A Question in the Final Systems of Míng-Time Guānhuà <i>W. South Coblin</i>	173
10. The Hénán Xìnyáng Dialect of 150 Years Ago: Evidence from Dialect Islands in Jiāngsū, Zhèjiāng, and Ānhuī <i>HUÁNG Xiǎodōng</i>	179
11. An Exploration of the Nature of Nánjīng Mandarin in the Míng Dynasty <i>ZĒNG Xiǎoyú</i>	194
12. Language Use in the Chinese Community of Manila in the Seventeenth Century: A Case of Occasional Diglossia? <i>Henning Klöter</i>	206
13. Frontier Mandarins and Lán Mào's <i>Yùnlüè yītōng</i> in the Míng <i>Richard VanNess Simmons</i>	220
14. On the Variation of the <i>Rù</i> Tone in the Shānyīn Dialect of Shānxī <i>GUŌ Lìxiá</i>	248
15. Tonal Features Based on Acoustic Analysis and Historical Development in Mùlěi Mandarin in Xīnjiāng <i>LIÚ Xīnzhōng</i>	266
List of Contributors	275
Index	279

# Figures and Map

## Figures

Figure 1.1: A couplet displaying all of the prosodic features discussed here	25
Figure 2.1: Lines of colloquial Cantonese in the <i>Maai<sup>6</sup> faa<sup>1</sup> dak<sup>1</sup> mei<sup>5</sup></i> opera text	47
Figure 2.2: Opening lines of 2005 hip hop <i>Our<sup>3</sup>-wan<sup>6</sup>-wui<sup>6</sup></i>	53
Figure 12.1: Excerpt from the <i>Dictionario</i> , f. 87v, with permission of Archivo de la Universidad de Santo Tomás, Manila	213
Figure 12.2: Excerpt from the <i>Dictionario</i> , f. 213v, with permission of Archivo de la Universidad de Santo Tomás, Manila	214
Figure 15.1: Contour of Mùlán Mandarin tones	268
Figure 15.2: CDC tone correspondence to the three tone contours of Mùlán Mandarin	271

## Map

Map 7.1: Distribution of words with the morpheme <i>yá</i> 呀 in modern dialects	143
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# Tables

1.1: Inconsistent Taiwanese reflection of some medieval initials	19
1.2: Accommodated rhyming ( <i>xiéyùn</i> 叶韻)	20
1.3: Raising of /a/ without effect on rhyming	20
1.4: Taiwanese tones <i>yīnqù</i> and <i>yángqù</i> rhyme	21
1.5: Táng tones <i>shǎng</i> (with voiced obstruent initials) and <i>qù</i> rhyme	22
1.6: Average duration of each syllable by tone category	23
1.7: Average duration of each syllable by both syllable-position and <i>píng-zè</i>	23
1.8: Average duration of each syllable by both place and tone category	24
1.9: Percentage of each tone category displaying melisma	24
2.1: Twelve words across three periods of orthographic changes of the <i>Huājiǎn jì</i> (花箋記)	52
8.1: Phonological features of regional variants of Mandarin	157
10.1: Alveopalatals in the Hénán dialect islands of Jiāngsū, Zhèjiāng, and Ānhuī	183
10.2: Pronunciation of the initial <i>rì</i> in Hénán, Jiāngsū, Zhèjiāng, and Ānhuī dialect islands (with <i>róng</i> 榮 and <i>yòng</i> 用 included for comparison)	184
10.3: The distinction between velar fricatives and labiodental fricatives in the Hénán dialect islands of Jiāngsū, Zhèjiāng, and Ānhuī	186
10.4: Presence or absence of rounded main vowels and medials in the Hénán dialect islands of Jiāngsū, Zhèjiāng, and Ānhuī	187
10.5: Comparison of tone contours in the Hénán dialect islands of Jiāngsū, Zhèjiāng, and Ānhuī	190
11.1: Phonological features found in the texts	198
11.2: Comparison of the transliterations with Mandarin dialect phonology	200
14.1: The Shānyīn pronunciations of <i>rù</i> tone syllables	250
14.2: List of informants by background	252
14.3: List of the <i>rù</i> tone syllables surveyed	253

14.4: The correspondence of Shānyīn tones with Middle Chinese initial types	254
14.5: Variant pronunciations on <i>rù</i> tone syllables	255
14.6: The state of change in the <i>rù</i> tone syllables surveyed	259
15.1: The average value of Mùlán Mandarin tones (pitch_Hz, duration_ms, and number of syllables)	267
15.2: The value of Mùlán Mandarin tones (logarithm value)	267
15.3: The correspondence of tone categories with the tone pitch of modern Mùlěi	269

# Introduction

## *Facets of the History of Colloquial Chinese as Reflected in the Dialects and in Texts*

Richard VanNess Simmons

This volume aims to broaden perspectives on the history of colloquial Chinese in the millennium following the age of Middle Chinese, which is generally dated to the early Táng dynasty (618–907). The general focus of the studies collected here is on the history of spoken Chinese as it is reflected in the dialects, and its influences on the languages used and represented in texts. That history is usually framed within the post Táng rise and evolution of Mandarin and centers on what is usually simply characterized as Old and/or Early Mandarin. Old and Early Mandarin are roughly contiguous with what is characterized in Chinese as *Jīndài Hànyǔ* 近代漢語, which refers to the language underlying the vernacular texts written in *báihuàwén* 白話文.

Yet little attention has been paid to the actual spoken languages behind the *báihuà* texts, beyond a general sense that they are a form of Mandarin or in making note of some apparent, though often coincidental, connection between words used in a text and some modern Mandarin dialect. An example is the connection purported to be seen between the language of the *Jīn Píng Méi* and the dialects of Shāndōng and other places—a connection that has been a frequent subject of discussion in the past couple of decades.<sup>1</sup> At the same time, non-Mandarin influences on the development of *báihuà* and the texts that take it as a medium are also neglected. Suffering as it does as primarily a history of the words and vocabulary of *báihuà* texts, the study of the language of vernacular texts is often strictly on the words in the texts and the graphs with which they are written. This can lead to infelicities in our understanding of the texts themselves. For instance, David Roy's generally masterful translation of the *Jīn Píng Méi* consistently renders the frequent occurrences of negative epithets containing the morpheme *qiú* 囚 as 'jailbird', for he was unaware of coarser meanings conveyed by that graph thorough its homonymic connection to vulgar Wú dialect words (see Zhāng Huīyīng in this volume).

Beyond the vernacular literary texts, phonologies of the language of the Old and Early Mandarin periods generally revolve around rime books and rime tables

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1. For examples, see Yīn Xiǎojié 殷曉傑 (2011) and Yáo Jígāng 姚吉剛 (2019). But also see Zhāng Huīyīng 張惠英 (2016).



that present standards of various ages, from *Zhōngyuán yīnyùn* 中原音韻 in the Yuán (1271–1368), to *Hóngwǔ zhèngyùn* 洪武正韻 in the early Míng (1368–1644), and encompassing various texts between, or following. However, attention to the connection between those standards and the living dialects of their time is limited to how contemporaneous dialects might have influenced sundry arcane and puzzling features of the various phonological texts themselves.<sup>2</sup> Such studies usually focus on the formal structures of the phonologies represented and how those phonologies correspond to, or differ from, the early authoritative model of the *Qièyùn* 切韻 of 601 CE. Rarely do scholars seek to understand the background of the authors or compilers and the dialects they might have actually spoken and how the history of those dialects might be reflected in the phonologies of texts. This volume is a preliminary effort to bring greater attention to some of these areas of neglect.

The studies collected in this volume grew out of a two-day workshop funded primarily by the Chiang Ching-Kuo Foundation and held at Rutgers University in March 2016. Its subject was “The History of Colloquial Chinese—Written and Spoken.” The workshop’s participants explored various issues related to colloquial languages in China in their spoken forms, the relationship between those spoken forms and written forms, colloquial literary language, and the Chinese phonological tradition. The chapters presented here are for the most part the result of the presentations made and discussions held at the workshop.

The dialect groups with the most substantial connections to written tradition include Mandarin, Wú, Mǐn, and Cantonese, in north, central, eastern coastal, and southern China, respectively. The studies in this collection focus on aspects of the histories of these dialects in their written and spoken forms, including regional variants, and their evolution and influence. These studies also bring new detail to our understanding of the underlying factors in the formation of supra-regional common languages in China, as well as the written forms to which they gave rise—specifically Guānhuà 官話 and báihuà 白話, respectively.

There are fifteen chapters in this collection. Eight of them were first written in Chinese, one first in Japanese. All were then translated expressly for this volume. Though a few of the authors offered their own translations, the editor (Richard V. N. Simmons) provided most of them, while also revising the other translations as necessary. Hence this collection presents authoritative representatives of the most current Chinese and Japanese scholarship on the history of Chinese to a broader English-speaking audience. Many of the ideas and issues touched on in the collection have not been widely considered outside China, such as the themes of the studies by Guō Lixiá, Huáng Lín, Huáng Xiǎodōng, Liú Xīnzhōng, Ní Zhìjiā, Shí Rǔjié, Zēng Xiǎoyú, Zhāng Huiyīng, and Zhāng Měilán. It is hoped that this volume can thus provide scholars working outside China and those who may not know Chinese with

2. The most recent, up-to-date, and state-of-the-art example of this approach can be found in Shen (2020).

a more nuanced picture of the history of Chinese and the Chinese dialects than is generally available in English.

We have divided the studies into two broad categories. The section titled “Chinese Dialects in Texts” comprises chapters that treat textual reflections of the dialects as well as the nature of dialects and their influence in the texts. The chapters in the section titled “Chinese Dialects and Their History” focus more directly on questions of language itself and how it evolved over time. But these categories can overlap, and the division is arbitrary in some cases.

Indeed, the first chapter in the collection straddles the categories of texts, dialects, and the history pertaining to both: David Prager Branner’s “Does Taiwanese Cantillation Reflect the Sound of the Táng?” This examination of a Taiwanese tradition of intoning received texts considers whether that traditional form of recitation reflects authentic features of the sounds of early literature and the prosodic tradition contained therein. The focus is on the rendering of received texts through reading and interpretation in a modern dialect that was not the language of the texts’ long-ago authors. Branner’s discussion reveals that while there is an oral reading tradition in the modern dialect, that tradition is constrained by both the dominant prosodic tradition in Chinese history and the inherent prosody of the original text, whose composition reflects resonances of its author’s contemporary dialect. Those resonances are then refracted into the sounds of the performer’s modern dialect following the conventions of the Taiwanese cantillation tradition. Branner concludes that the tradition allows “native speakers to take possession of premodern literature using their own phonology.” The dialect of the texts’ origin and that of the performance can be quite different. Branner’s discussion reveals that something of the history of each can be discerned through careful analysis of the outcome.

The interplay between text and language is also the subject of the chapter by Marjorie Chan. Her study examines a relationship between dialect performance and text that differs from the one Branner discusses, one in which the transcribed content of performances in the Cantonese dialect informed and nurtured the development of the Cantonese written vernacular. Focusing particularly on written materials that were unabashedly intended to represent vernacular Cantonese, such as opera scripts for mass readership, songbooks, and printed lyrics, Chan shows how a non-Mandarin dialect was able to develop a flourishing written tradition that fed into, and reciprocally spun out of, popular culture from historical times (at least as early as the eighteenth century) into the present. While written Modern Standard Chinese, which is Mandarin, still serves as a higher, more formal register that is indispensable in overall literacy among Cantonese speakers, Chan presents to us a purely Cantonese realm of literate activity, literary composition, and textual interaction. Within this realm one is able to enjoy the delights of a form of Chinese literacy that is free to function in its own milieu and move beyond the confines of Mandarin traditions, standards, and usage.

In contrast, in the seventeenth-century literature of Wú dialect provenance, which often cheekily and sometimes liberally incorporated Wú vernacular, Mandarin remained ever-present. A purely Wú dialect presentation is not easily found on the written page. Thus Shí Rǔjié, in his contribution, finds that Féng Mènglóng's 馮夢龍 (1574–1646) *Shāngē* 山歌, which ostensibly is written purely in the Sūzhōu 蘇州 Wú dialect of its author, frequently mixes in Mandarin vocabulary and grammatical forms. Nevertheless, Shí Rǔjié finds that overall, Féng Mènglóng's book is written primarily in Wú dialect, albeit with many Mandarin elements folded in, often unconsciously. As such, the volume does not represent what would have been actual spoken dialect of Féng Mènglóng's time and place. Even so, it serves as a treasure trove of Wú dialect vocabulary and usage that allows Shí Rǔjié to glean and describe much detail about the dialect of seventeenth-century Sūzhōu.

The mixing of dialect type and register in vernacular Chinese texts is often a result of the transmission process: story elements from earlier texts and authors are adopted and developed by later authors in the production of new editions or new stories. In his chapter, Huáng Lín offers an example of the mixing process in his examination of the adoption of textual content from the *Shuǐhǔ zhuàn* 水滸傳 in the *Jīn Píng Méi*. It is generally known that the author of the *Jīn Píng Méi cihuà* incorporated a popular story from the *Shuǐhǔ zhuàn* as a starting point for an entirely new and different novel. The story was folded into the *Jīn Píng Méi* through a process whereby the author embedded whole passages from the *Shuǐhǔ zhuàn* into the new novel but then augmented and embellished them with words and phrases in colloquial dialect (*súyǔ* 俗語) that contrast with the basically Mandarin plain vernacular (*báihuà* 白話) that the *Shuǐhǔ* was written in. The result is that the language in the *Jīn Píng Méi cihuà* deviates so much from the Mandarin-based *báihuà* that, as Huáng Lín tells us, the novel is considered by some scholars to be close to a novel in dialect (*fāngyán xiǎoshuō* 方言小說). But which dialect? To answer that question, Huáng Lín reviews the arguments that the author was from Shāndōng and adopted elements from the Shāndōng dialect. In the end, though, he finds a stronger connection to the Wú dialects on the basis of vocabulary found in the dialect elements as well as some matters of homophony that are more clearly explained by Wú pronunciation. Nevertheless, Huáng Lín is hesitant to regard this judgment as conclusive; and he remains puzzled by an issue that seems to undermine his argument.

In her contribution, Zhāng Huīyīng argues that the issue troubling Huáng Lín can be easily attributed to the *Jīn Píng Méi* author's love of wordplay, which is found in abundant measure in the dialect-influenced language of the novel. Zhāng Huīyīng has no doubt that the author was a Wú dialect speaker and that the wordplay in the novel, including the author's frequent punning, earthy expressions, double-entendre, and clever use of homophony, is all overwhelmingly based on Wú dialect phonology and usage. Elsewhere she has definitively argued that "the language of the *Jīn Píng Méi* is composed of non-Mandarin dialect elements layered onto a Mandarin foundation, among which Wú dialect elements comprise the largest concentration,

particularly Zhèjiāng 浙江 Wú elements.”<sup>3</sup> In her chapter in this volume, Zhāng Huìyīng further bolsters her case with an examination of the Wú dialect coloring of vulgarisms and obscenities, both of which are liberally sprinkled throughout the *Jīn Píng Méi*. While the identity of the author of the *Jīn Píng Méi* remains obscure to this day, his linguistic background is clearly discernable in the liberal layering of his beloved colloquial Wú dialect vocabulary and wordplay across the surface of the northern *báihuà* vernacular foundation of the novel’s language.

Missionaries’ efforts to learn and teach dialects in the nineteenth century led them to compile textbooks for the purpose. Though these textbooks were expressly intended to teach natural spoken dialect, they were often modeled on textbooks that had been compiled to teach Mandarin. Thus, we are left with a conundrum similar to the one we face when teasing out colloquial dialect from Guānhuà and *báihuà* in the texts of vernacular literature. Zhāng Měilán tackles this issue in her chapter in this volume, which looks at two late nineteenth-century Shanghainese textbooks (*Tǔhuà zhīnán* 土話指南 and *Huìyǔ zhīnán* 滬語指南) that were modeled on a Mandarin textbook (*Guide to Kuan Hua* or *Guānhuà zhīnán* 官話指南) that had been compiled a few years prior. The Shanghainese texts methodically translated all of the examples in the *Guide to Kuan Hua*. This allows Zhāng Měilán to carry out a systematic comparison. Her discussion provides an overview of the similarities and differences between the Shanghainese and the Mandarin versions with regard to vocabulary and grammar as well as a comparison of the Shanghainese of the texts in light of what is known about older and younger varieties of that language. She finds that the two dialect textbooks accurately reflect the Shanghainese of the late nineteenth century, both lexically and grammatically.

Ní Zhìjiā’s chapter takes a different direction in the exploration of dialect in text. Instead of sorting through one or two texts for clues to the disparate dialect elements they may contain, he probes a wide variety of texts in search of the origin, etymological development, and dialect distribution of a single word of interest: *yá’ér* 牙兒, which started out meaning ‘infant’ but came to mean ‘child’. Ní Zhìjiā finds that this word was probably the more common word for ‘child’ in the Mandarin koine of the Northern Sòng (960–1127) and was widely distributed from central China south into the middle and lower Yangtze River watershed region. Following the collapse of the Northern Sòng, *yá’ér* diffused as far south as Hángzhōu 杭州, the capital of the Southern Sòng (1127–1279) and faded in use in central China. The word eventually also fell out of use in the prestige varieties of Mandarin and is only preserved in dialects, primarily those in the Yangtze watershed. Ní Zhìjiā’s examination of the geographic and historical distribution of this key colloquial word uncovers some of the history and layering that have affected Mandarin over the centuries, within both its prestige and non-prestige varieties.

3. Zhāng Huìyīng 張惠英 (2016, 703): “《金瓶梅》的語言是在北方話的基礎上，吸收了其他方言，其中，吳方言特別是浙江吳語顯得比較集中。”

The interplay between normative koines and prestige and non-prestige varieties of Mandarin is a frequent focus of the chapters in the section on Chinese dialects and their history. Kengo Chiba's chapter looks at one case of the development of a norm for a Mandarin koine that is remarkably easy to delineate historically. In the mid-nineteenth century, missionaries working in the Western Mandarin region chose the dialect of Chéngdū 成都 in Sìchuān 四川 as the base dialect for their transcriptions of the regional koine, both in Romanized form and in Chinese characters. Chiba argues that by "codifying" the dialect in a written form, building on nascent roots in local tradition and developing a large variety of written materials in the dialect, which were then widely disseminated, the missionaries provided the Chéngdū dialect with prestige and a foundation to serve as the regional Mandarin koine standard. The missionaries also used the Chéngdū standard in their teaching in West China Union University, which they had established, thus further burnishing the koine's prestige throughout China's southwestern territories. In contrast to what Chiba finds with regard to the influence of missionary preference and activity on the rise of the dialect of Chéngdū as the standard for the regional Mandarin koine, this volume's editor has argued elsewhere that the influence of Westerners on the choice of Běijīng as the underlying standard for the national language is far more diluted than is generally assumed.<sup>4</sup> However, Chiba's overview of the Western and Japanese switch of preference from the Southern Mandarin Nánjīng-based koine to a Běijīng-based standard in the course of the nineteenth century provides a useful overview of the situation.

The reference works and other materials developed by the earliest Western missionaries to China for use in their study of Chinese reveal much about the nature and details of the Míng Mandarin koine. Some of those details can be unexpected, such as in the situation discussed by W. South Coblin in his contribution to this volume. Coblin examines the formal pronunciation of the finals in a series of syllables recorded by the Korean sinologist Sin Sukchu 申叔舟 (1417–1475) in the mid-fifteenth century that is quite unusual and thus has been considered of suspect reliability by modern scholars. The unexpected pronunciation relates to the lack of a medial *-u-* in syllables where most Mandarin dialects have the medial, such as seen in the Běijīng pronunciation of *chuāng* 窗 'window' and *zhuàng* 壯 'strong, robust'. Exploring the record of the pronunciation of the forms in question as produced by missionaries in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, Coblin finds representations of the exact same apparently anomalous pronunciation. Although he does not identify a corresponding pronunciation in modern Mandarin dialects, Coblin demonstrates that the missionary sources coincide closely with Sin Sukchu in this feature, thus providing several independent witnesses to the pronunciation within a broad geographic range and time span. Hence the unusual pronunciation must surely have had a basis in living versions of the Míng Mandarin koine and cannot be easily dismissed.

4. See Simmons (2017, 2020).

Indeed, the feature Coblin discusses is found in the set of Mandarin dialects examined in Huáng Xiǎodōng's contribution. In this comparative and historical look at dialects originating in Hénán 河南, Huáng Xiǎodōng examines how dialect islands preserve historical features that may or may not have changed in their source dialects. He compares a set of dialect islands in Jiāngsū 江蘇, Zhèjiāng 浙江, and Ānhuī 安徽 that are descended from the language of migrants from Hénán in the area of modern Xīnyáng 信陽 and provides a detailed inventory of their similarities and differences. Features that the dialect islands share with the Hénán source would be preservations of features that were common to all when they first separated 150 years ago. Among all the various features that Huáng Xiǎodōng examines, he notes that both the dialect islands and the Xīnyáng source share a lack of the medial *-u-* in the set of syllables that include *chuāng* 'window' and *zhuàng* 'strong, robust'. So, the feature discussed by Coblin in this volume does indeed exist in some varieties of Mandarin, and Huáng Xiǎodōng has shown us that it also was found in living Hénán dialects a century and a half ago and likely even earlier.

Variation in the characteristics of the historical Mandarin koine, such as the divergent pronunciations for the same set of words that Coblin discusses, is in fact a predictable element in the basic nature of the koine itself. Many scholars seek a single identifiable dialect as the source or foundation for the Míng koine that came to be called Guānhuà 官話. Some find that the dialect of Nánjīng was that source; others argue that the source is to be found in Jiāng-Huái 江淮 variants with a connection to Central Plains dialects. After summarizing these competing views in her contribution, Zēng Xiǎoyú shows that the koine was in fact a dynamic, flexible language that allowed for variation and that accommodated a variety of features. She makes her case through comparison of a variety of Míng and Qīng period descriptions of the Mandarin koine compiled by Chinese, Korean, Japanese, and Western scholars. She finds that Guānhuà can best be characterized with a small set of distinguishing features that are generally shared by all the versions represented in the sources she examines. Moreover, a majority of the descriptions she looks at reflect an additional small set of features that are specifically characteristic of the Mandarin dialects of the Jiāng-Huái region. She concludes that the Míng Mandarin koine thus was a "flexible amalgam" of characteristics that came together in a "dynamic elastic system and without a rigidly fixed model" and that allowed for features not necessarily fully shared by both the northern Zhōngyuán 中原 and the southern Jiāng-Huái type Mandarins.

The chapter by Henning Klöter explores the reach of Míng Guānhuà beyond China's borders and the status and role that the koine might have played in an overseas Chinese community in Míng times. Klöter's approach is primarily a socio-linguistic one, through which he seeks to characterize how Mandarin might have been perceived and used in an overseas community where it was not the dominantly spoken Chinese language. Looking at the use of Mandarin in a Chinese Hokkien (southern Mǐn dialect) speech community, known as the Sangleys, in Manila in the

seventeenth century, Klöter finds that Mandarin had a prestige “High” status that was underpinned by “social beliefs deeply anchored in the culture of” the Chinese community and bolstered by visits of government officials from China (mandarins). But the historical evidence he has uncovered to date does not shed much light on whether that status led to any significant use of Mandarin in local communication and interaction. At most all that can be discerned so far are minor traces of the use of Mandarin, traces that Klöter designates as “occasional diglossia.” Nevertheless, the fact that the prestige of the Míng Guānhuà koine had purchase in the imagination of Chinese living so far from the homeland is strong evidence of the strength of that prestige and the importance of the koine within China proper.

The spread of Guānhuà inside Míng China is the subject of the chapter by Simmons. His study examines the Mandarin of dialect islands in southeastern China that formed in the Míng period and compares them to a Mandarin phonology recorded in a fifteenth-century Guānhuà rime book, the *Yùnlüè yìtōng* 韻畧易通. The Mandarin phonology of that rhyme book was conservative for its time as it does not include innovations in Mandarin that occurred in the north earlier in the Yuán and are also not seen in the modern dialects of the Yúnnán 雲南 homeland of its author, Lán Mào 蘭茂 (1397–1476). Yet several of the conservative features of the *Yùnlüè yìtōng* are shared by the Mandarin dialect islands in the southeast. As noted earlier, dialect islands preserve historical features that may or may not have changed in their modern source dialects. While Lán Mào’s Yúnnán dialect, which likely had recently migrated from Luòyáng 洛陽 in Hénán 河南, was not the specific source of the various Mandarin dialect islands, it is highly likely that they had roughly contiguous source dialects. Thus, the dialect islands have preserved features shared by source dialects that were subsequently lost in the Yúnnán descendant of Lán Mào’s language. Simmons argues that a set of those shared features also encompasses the most salient characteristics of the type of Guānhuà that had the widest geographical currency in early Míng times: the southern variety of the Mandarin koine that Zēng Xiǎoyú in her chapter refers to as the Jiāng-Huái type. Simmons’s findings also resonate with those of Zēng Xiǎoyú in noting that the Guānhuà koine had a flexible, dynamic nature that allowed for a degree of variation. But Simmons emphasizes that there was a core set of features that were consistently shared across the koine and the dialects related to it. The aggregate of that core set of features also likely functioned as a kind of hallmark that identified the Guānhuà koine and outlined the parameters of the prestige language that its speakers embodied or aspired to emulate.

One of the most dramatic changes that happened in the set of Mandarin dialects that includes the Běijīng dialect was the loss of the *rù* tone, which broadly went missing in Northern Mandarin and the northern variety of the Guānhuà koine and, as a result, is also missing in Modern Standard Chinese. The loss of the *rù* tone has left the standard language critically bereft of an important actor in traditional prosody, which is consequently impossible to fully grasp when reading in the Běijīng-based pronunciation of Modern Standard Chinese. The changes that led to the loss of the *rù*



tone happened according to regular patterns in most Mandarin dialects, but for social and historical reasons, the outcome in Běijīng was partly irregular. The changes caused by the loss were completed at least a couple of centuries ago in Northern Mandarin dialects. The resulting Běijīng version of the situation has now become fixed for the standard language and codified in modern dictionaries.

Guō Lìxiá's contribution presents a view of *rù* tone change in progress in the Shānyīn 山陰 dialect of Shānxī 山西 (belonging to the Jin 晉 group of northern dialects that are closely related to Mandarin), providing a modern example of the kinds of sociolinguistic factors that come into play as well as the paths the changes can take among competing influences. These competing factors include pressure from the dominant prestige language—spoken Pǔtōnghuà 普通話 (Modern Standard Chinese)—as well as word frequency and sociolinguistic register. Similar factors must also have been in play when the *rù* tone was reshuffled into the other tones in the Běijīng dialect. But their effects arose at a time when the dominant prestige dialect was the Nánjīng-like variety of Guānhuà, the Southern Mandarin koine; and thus it was the colloquial language of Běijīng that was affected by the outside pressure.

The loss of the *rù* tone is also a central point of attention in Liú Xīnzhōng's contribution to this volume, which examines the evolution of the tones in the north-western Mandarin dialect of Mùlěi 木壘. That dialect has only three contrastive tone categories, *píng*, *shǎng*, and *qù*, which differs from the usual situation in Mandarin dialects wherein the *píng* tone is split into two registers, *yīnpíng* and *yángpíng*. Liú Xīnzhong approaches the question through the lens of experimental phonetics and a detailed analysis of a large database of recordings of the syllables of that dialect. In the results of his analysis, Liú Xīnzhong demonstrates what happened in Mùlěi in the wake of the loss of the *rù* tone category in that dialect. He finds that the changes followed regular patterns that merged most of the *rù* tone syllables with the *qù* tone, while a set of the *rù* syllables that corresponded to Middle Chinese ancestral forms that had voiced obstruent initials are merged instead with the *shǎng* tone. Liú Xīnzhong also tells us that the set of syllables originally belonging to an earlier *yángpíng* tone also merged entirely with the *shǎng* tone. We can infer from this state of affairs that there was likely an intermediate stage in which that latter set of *rù* syllables had first merged with a premodern *yángpíng* tone and then moved together with the *yángpíng* syllables into the *shǎng* tone. This path of evolution corresponds fairly neatly with the general pattern of tonal evolution in Northern Mandarin dialects.

In broad perspective, the studies collected in this volume are connected by several shared historical developments and related trends and influences that affected the dialects both internally and in their relationship to texts and the language of literature. These studies have identified clues to those developments and trends in the history of colloquial Chinese and dialects in a variety of sources that serve as witnesses to the languages in earlier times. These witnesses include texts written in language that contains or mixes in colloquial forms, dialect islands that preserve features of historical stages of the languages, contemporary Chinese descriptions and



materials such as rime tables and rime books from outside the orthodox phonological tradition that reveal features of their compilers' languages, and descriptions of Chinese languages by people from outside China who studied and made a record of the Chinese they heard. The missionaries held a particularly broad role in the latter case, not only by recording, and sometimes even codifying, varieties of Mandarin, but also in bringing written form to non-Mandarin dialects. Below is a collective summary of conclusions that can be culled from what the chapters in this volume drew from their sources:

- There was regular interaction between text and spoken Chinese that had a variety of effects and outcomes, in both the composition of texts and in their reading or performance. This holds true even though the nature of the Chinese written language and Chinese characters obscures the orality and phonology of the spoken Chinese language and dialects.
- The language of vernacular literature, *báihuàwén* 白話文, while based on a Mandarin foundation that was closely related to, and counterpart to, colloquial Guānhuà and its varieties, still often absorbed non-Mandarin dialect elements. But the power, prestige, and normative influence of Guānhuà was for the most part an insurmountable obstacle in efforts to break fully free of Mandarin in *báihuà* writing and literacy.
- Guānhuà was not a single, well-defined language like Modern Standard Chinese. The Guānhuà Mandarin koine was instead characterized by significant flexibility and diversity in historical times. Nevertheless, it had a powerful prestige and a broad geographic reach in the Míng and the Qīng. Within this state of affairs, the strongest Guānhuà variety was the Southern Mandarin variety, which had the widest geographic spread and held the greatest prestige in both dynasties.
- Of all the phonological features discussed, the *rù* tone played the most critical role in the history of colloquial Chinese. Its loss in Northern Mandarin dialects created a dramatic difference between the northern and southern varieties of the Guānhuà koine. The greater prestige of the southern variety of Guānhuà was in part due to the fact that it was the variety that maintained a *rù* tone, which held a prominent place in literature, in the koine, and in many dialects.

The chapters in this volume present much detail that illustrates and fleshes out these conclusions. These are not the only findings contained within these chapters, as can be seen in the above discussion. Yet this summary of conclusions should help guide interested readers in navigating the various arguments and discoveries of the contributors, as well as in identifying areas for further investigation, of which many remain.

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# The Demarcation of Western Mandarin and the Designation of the Chéngdū Dialect as Its Standard Form in Modern China\*

Kengo Chiba

## Introduction

One of the most striking events in the history of colloquial Chinese was the emergence of Guānhuà 官話 (Mandarin),<sup>1</sup> which was used by the upper social classes and was the *lingua franca* in the Míng–Qīng era. No one can contest that Mandarin provided the foundation for China's modern national languages, which were later called Guóyǔ 國語 and Pǔtōnghuà 普通話. Most previous studies have analyzed how Mandarin came to be the national language—in particular, how the Běijīng dialect came to be identified as the basis of the national language—from the perspective of social history and sociolinguistics (Murata and Lamarre 2005, esp. pts. 1 and 2; Kaske 2008; Hirata 2016). Yet in spite of the accumulated studies on this topic, little is known about the process whereby a dialect came to be regarded as the dominant form in a specific region in China. Chiba (2007a), for example, analyzed Western Mandarin and pointed out that the establishment of a regional typical language involved nearly the same mechanism as the establishment of a national standard language. However, the process of creation of a typical dialect requires further research.

In the present day, it would be sensible to assume that the language of Shànghǎi should be the representative of the Wú 吳 dialects, that of Chángshā 長沙 of the Xiāng 湘 dialects, and that of Hong Kong or Guǎngzhōu of the Yuè 粵 dialects.<sup>2</sup> However, taking the Wú dialects as an example, the political and economic heartland of Wú, which overlapped with half of Jiāngsū 江蘇 and most of Zhèjiāng 浙江 province, was not Shànghǎi but Sūzhōu 蘇州 until the middle of the nineteenth century.

\* This work is supported by the Japan Society for the Promotion of Science (JSPS) Grant-in-Aid for Scientific Research (Type C, #26370509) and the Chuo University Overseas Research Program.

1. Mandarin has at least three different meanings from the view of sociolinguistics: (1) the language that civil officers used during the Míng–Qīng period; (2) China-proper dialects that encompass most of the territory of Greater China; and (3) the language that became the matrix of development of the standard national language in the twentieth century. See Yoshikawa (2015, 53–54). In this chapter, the term *Mandarin* as defined in the first instance is used.
2. Two of the most basic books on Chinese dialectology, Běijīng dàxué (1989) and Yuán (2001), indirectly support this point of view by referring to these dialects in order to describe the features of the dialect groups in which they are included.

Thus, the prestige of the Shànghǎi dialect must be due to Shànghǎi's improved political and economic presence in that period: to be more exact, it must have been due to research, learning, and the unconscious codification of the dialect by Westerners who came to the city after 1842. Here, it is worth pointing out that there were some deliberate attempts by foreigners to demarcate dialect areas and choose typical dialect forms in China during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.

In Western Mandarin, the dialect of Chéngdū 成都, which has been the capital of Sìchuān 四川 province for more than 300 years, is usually considered the representative dialect.<sup>3</sup> Many previous studies that have argued for the internal demarcation of Western Mandarin list the Chéngdū dialect among its subdivisions (Sìchuān shěng fāngyán diàochá zhǐdǎozǔ 1960; Huáng 1986; Zhōngguó shèhuì Kēxuéyuàn et al. 2012). Yet there seems to be little agreement on how the Chéngdū dialect gained this position. There are several other major cities in the western provinces, such as Chóngqìng 重慶, Wǔhàn 武漢, Guìyáng 貴陽, and Kūnmíng 昆明, which would have rivaled Chéngdū. So it is difficult to insist on the political and economic dominance of Chéngdū in the twentieth century.

In this chapter, I demonstrate that research on the Chinese language, as well as the language education of Western Mandarin led by foreigners (including missionary scholars in China), influenced the development of the Chéngdū dialect as the dominant form of Western Mandarin. Historical research on colloquial Chinese shows that what we often considered to be the dominant dialect of an area was not consciously selected due to its representative linguistic features, but rather was adopted because of historical circumstances.

## Mandarin(s) in the Míng-Qīng Period and Its Traditional Classification

In the Míng-Qīng period, Mandarin was spoken among people above a certain social position and was regarded as the *lingua franca*. Since Mandarin held social prestige because of its use by officials and was understood by a large portion of the population, missionaries coming to China were often obliged to study Mandarin before learning the dialect of the region to which they had been appointed. Thus, the missionaries compiled quite a few linguistic works in Mandarin.

According to the accounts of these foreigners, Mandarin was the language spoken at court, where mandarins and literati gathered from all over the empire. For example, American missionary scholar and diplomat Samuel Wells Williams referred to Mandarin as “the court dialect,” using this term in one of his works (Williams 1844). Thirty years later, Williams wrote about the social status of Nánjīng 南京 Mandarin in the late nineteenth century as follows: “In this wide area, the Nanking, called 南京官話 [Nánjīng Guānhuà] or 正音 [Zhèngyīn] or true pronunciation, is

3. See Běijīng dàxué (1989) and Yuán (2001).

probably the most used, and described as 通行的話 [*tōngxíng de huà*], or the speech everywhere understood” (Williams 1874, xxxii).

In spite of these claims, it was the Běijīng dialect that rose gradually in sociolinguistic status to become the fashionable and/or official language of the empire.<sup>4</sup> The Běijīng dialect gained prominence because of Běijīng’s position as the capital of the empire. Williams underpinned this fact by referring to the Běijīng dialect as follows: “The Peking, however, also known as 北京話 [Běijīnghuà] or 京話 [Jīnghuà] is now most fashionable and courtly, and like the English spoken in London, or the French in Paris, is regarded as the accredited court language of the empire” (Williams 1874, xxxii). His observation aptly reflected the Běijīng dialect’s rising position.

According to Takata (2001), from the mid-nineteenth century on, as modern diplomatic relationships, characterized by treaties and exchanges of legations, were established between China and Western nations, the legitimacy of the Běijīng dialect greatly strengthened. Takata hypothesized that Thomas Francis Wade’s monumental textbook on the Běijīng dialect, *A Progressive Course* (1867), helped Běijīng Mandarin rise to the status of China’s national language. Thus, the rise of the Běijīng dialect was first realized through diplomatic discourse. Yoshikawa Masayuki accepted this view and revealed the genealogy of the “Běijīng school” of British diplomats that traced back to Thomas Taylor Meadows and John Francis Davis. Meadows was an interpreter at the British consulate in Canton and later in Shànghǎi, and taught Wade basic Chinese in his younger days.<sup>5</sup> Davis was the second governor of Hong Kong (1844–1848) and had such a high regard for Wade that he made Wade Vice Chinese interpreter in 1847. Yoshikawa elucidated that the Běijīng school stressed the importance of studying the Běijīng dialect as early as the 1840s. For instance, Meadows invented the Romanization system for the Běijīng dialect, which Wade followed in his famous system of Romanization for the Běijīng dialect<sup>6</sup> (Yoshikawa 2015). Twenty years after the dawning of the Běijīng school era, Wade made a famous declaration in his book: “Pekinese is the dialect an official interpreter ought to learn. Since the establishment of foreign legations with their corps of students at Peking, it has become next to impossible that any other should take precedence” (Wade 1867, vi).

Nánjīng Mandarin and the Běijīng dialect were mutually intelligible; even so, the difference between the two gradually became apparent to intellectuals. First, from the aspect of phonology, apart from the palatalization of initials before high-front vowels in syllables of the *jiàn* 見 (velar) and *jīng* 精 (dental sibilant) series,

4. Nakamura Masayuki points out that no materials show the phonetic features of “Běijīng Mandarin” that marks a clear distinction from the Běijīng dialect, thus, proposing a hypothesis that there was only the Běijīng dialect, Běijīng Mandarin never existed (Nakamura 2006, 1–4). This chapter supports Nakamura’s idea. For more discussion, see Chiba (2019, 51–56).

5. Wade dedicated his first published textbook of the Běijīng dialect titled *The Book of Experiments* 尋津錄 [*Xún jīn lù*] (1859) to Meadows. Though Meadows had incurred the Foreign Ministry’s displeasure for years due to the gaps in opinion on diplomatic policy toward China, Wade did not avoid Meadows and acknowledged his contributions in public. See Kwan (2013, 29–47).

6. Meadows (1847, 48). He invented the spelling *hs* for the unvoiced alveolo-palatal fricative [ç].

the major indexes for distinguishing one variety from the other were as follows: (a) the *rù* 入 tone was an independent tone in Nánjīng Mandarin, while it merged into the other three tones in the Běijīng dialect; (b) from the mid-Qīng period onward, the *jiàn* and *jīng* series initials were distinguished in Nánjīng Mandarin before high-front vowels,<sup>7</sup> whereas they were mixed and confused in the Běijīng dialect; (c) syllables belonging to *rùshēng*, especially those ending in *-k* in Middle Chinese, had diphthongs or triphthongs in the Běijīng dialect, but not in Nánjīng Mandarin; for example, according to Wade's Romanization system, which is based on the Běijīng dialect, *bái* 白 'white' is read as *paɪ*<sup>2</sup> and *duó* 鐸 'bell' as *tuo*<sup>2</sup>, while these characters are pronounced as *pe* and *to*, respectively, in Williams (1874), a typical dictionary of Nánjīng Mandarin; (d) the Běijīng dialect clearly distinguished the finals *-o* and *-uo* of the traditional *Guǒshè* 果攝 rhyme group (i.e. those traditionally ascribed to *kāikǒu* 開口 and *hékǒu* 合口 syllables of Division I [*yī děng* 一等]), for example *gè* 個 [a measure word] and *hé* 河 'river' in contrast to *guò* 過 'pass' and *huò* 貨 'commodity', while Nánjīng Mandarin did not. Consider the examples of 河 *ho* and 過 *kuo*, found in Wade (1867), compared to *ho* 河 and *ko* 過 in Williams (1874).<sup>8</sup>

Second, from the aspect of lexicon, it will be helpful to refer to the materials compiled by Westerners, especially those focused on the phrasal differences between Nánjīng Mandarin and the Běijīng dialect. For example, American missionary Calvin Wilson Mateer's *A Course of Mandarin Lessons* (1892), which concerns the three variations of Mandarin—Běijīng, Jīnán 濟南, and Nánjīng—indicated the words employed by each language with three lines.<sup>9</sup> However, as Jīnán is often dropped in the book, lines may be reduced from three to two. These two lines then show the contrast between Nánjīng and Běijīng variations. In examples (1) and (2) below, a slash differentiates between the Nánjīng and Běijīng expressions, in that order, from left to right. Hence, Nánjīng Mandarin uses *difang* 地方, while the Běijīng dialect employs *luòdì* 落地 for 'place' in (1). In (2), Nánjīng Mandarin uses *jǐduō* 幾多, while the Běijīng dialect employs *duōme* 多麼 in 'how far'.

7. See the discussion on Table 8.1. This is the so-called *jiān-tuán* 尖團 'sharp-round' distinction, the diagnostic significance of which is also touched upon by Zēng Xiǎoyú and Simmons in their contributions to this volume.

8. Some materials do not follow this tendency. For example, though Prémare's *Notitia Linguae Sinicae* (ca. 1728) shows Nánjīng Mandarin-like features as defined in indexes (a) to (c), his Romanization of *hé* 河 and *guò* 過 are *ho* (*kāikǒu*) and *kouo* (*hékǒu*), respectively (Prémare ca.1728/1831). Also, Edkins states as follows: "In the mandarin dictionaries another final is made by inserting u before o. Thus 歌 [gē], 戈 [gē], are pronounced ko, kwo respectively, and 賀 [hè], 禍 [huò], ho, hwo, but the w after h appears to be now falling into disuse" (Edkins 1857, 49).

9. Though Mateer recognizes that these three dialects are all mutually cognate Mandarins, I have an opposite viewpoint. See note 4.

- (1) 那 // 個 // [地方/落地] // 不 // 好  
Nà // ge // [dìfang/luòdì] // bù // hǎo  
that // CL<sup>10</sup> // place // NEG // good  
“That place is not good.” (Mateer 1892, 1)<sup>11</sup>
- (2) 府上 // 到 // 這裏 // [幾多/多麼] // 遠  
Fǔshàng // dào // zhèlǐ // [jǐduō/duōme] // yuǎn  
your.house // to // here // how.much // distant  
“How far is it from your house to this place?” (Mateer 1892, 49)

The Third Mandarin

According to the currently accepted subdivision, the dialect of Mandarin spoken in southwestern China is called Western Mandarin or *Xīnán Guānhuà* 西南官話. However, the term “Western Mandarin” is of fairly recent origin. It was first used by Joseph Edkins, an outstanding British missionary-scholar in the field of linguistics, as follows: “The finals wan and wang coincide in the Nanking dialect, where 光 [guāng] and 官 [guān] are both pronounced kwan. They are kept clearly separate in northern and western mandarin” (Edkins 1857, 47).

Edkins first divided Mandarin into three regional variations. He wrote: “Accordingly a third Mandarin system must here be introduced. The Nanking and Peking dialects are at least as wide apart, as that of Sī-c’huwen [i.e., Sìchuān] is from either of them. In fact, the three are varieties of the same great dialect” (Edkins 1857, 8). The phonetic features of the three variants are illustrated in Table 8.1.<sup>12</sup> The plus sign ‘+’ means that the feature is applicable for that variation, the minus sign ‘-’ indicates that it is not applicable, and the plus-minus sign ‘±’ means that it is irregular depending on the documents.

Table 8.1: Phonological features of regional variants of Mandarin

	Southern (Nánjīng)	Northern (Běijīng)	Western (Chéngdū)
(a) The <i>rù</i> tone is an independent tone	+	—	±
(b) <i>Jiān</i> and <i>tuán</i> type initials are distinct	+	—	+
(c) Finals in <i>rù</i> tone syllables are diphthongs or triphthongs	—	+	—
(d) Finals <i>-o</i> and <i>-uo</i> of <i>Guōshè</i> 果攝 are distinct	±	+	—

10. Abbreviations used here and/or below in this chapter are: CAUS = causative; CL = classifier; CONT = continuous; IMP = imperative; NEG = negation; PASS = passive; PERF = perfective; PROG = progressive; PRT = sentence-final particle.

11. Romanizations in examples (1) and (2) employ the *pīnyīn* system. The English translations are extracted from the text of Mateer (1900, 5, 225).

12. Besides these four features, Western Mandarin generally makes no distinction between initials /n/ and /l/, and between /n/ and /ŋ/ at the end of a syllable when preceded by the vowels /i/ and /ə/. Although the former feature is shared by the Nánjīng *dialect*, most of the materials on Nánjīng *Mandarin* make a clear distinction between these two initials.

# Language Use in the Chinese Community of Manila in the Seventeenth Century

## *A Case of Occasional Diglossia?*

Henning Klöter

### Introduction

Research on the history of Mandarin (*guanhua* 官話) traditionally focuses on diachronic changes in the areas of phonology, lexicon and syntax (cf., *inter alia*, Coblin 2000, 2009, 2010, 2017). It is thus concerned with diachronic language changes in a stricter sense, that is, changes pertaining to language as such. In contrast, taking a sociolinguistic approach, this chapter places the spread of Mandarin in the historical context of a Chinese speech community outside China—the Chinese migrants who settled in the Philippines during the seventeenth century. The settlers are commonly referred to as *Sangleys* or *Sangleyes* in historical sources. To what extent can it be claimed that their community was characterized by societal multilingualism? Can the language situation in the Sangley speech community be described in terms of diglossia? If yes, on what grounds is it possible to identify different varieties in terms of the traditional high (H) versus low (L) dichotomy? Concretely speaking, what role did Mandarin play in the Chinese community of Manila in the early seventeenth century? This question refers to both language competences of the Chinese migrants in Manila and their language attitudes toward Mandarin as the *lingua franca* of the officials, irrespective of their own individual competences. This chapter argues that in terms of individual competences and total number of competent speakers, there are some historical traces of Mandarin as an H variety in the Chinese speech community. Although the settlers mainly spoke Hokkien, a southern Sinitic variety originating in China's southeastern Fujian province, we may assume that the recognition of the high status of Mandarin was well-established and inextricably linked with the continuity of social hierarchies across regional boundaries.

My approach to the questions raised above has received much inspiration from publications in the area of historical sociolinguistics. This interdisciplinary field at the nexus of linguistics and social history explores “the extent to which sociolinguistic theoretical models, methods, findings, and expertise can be applied to the process of reconstruction of the past of languages in order to account for diachronic linguistic changes and developments” (Conde-Silvestre and Hernández-Campoy 2012, 4). In



sociolinguistics, answers to questions pertaining to language choice, language proficiency, and language attitudes can be gained through different methods, including surveys, interviews, observation, and experiments. By contrast, historical sociolinguistics relies entirely on an analysis of historical documents. As Hernández-Campoy and Schilling write, “the socio-linguistic study of historical language forms must rely on linguistic records from previous periods—most of which will be incomplete or non-representative in some way—as well as on knowledge and understanding of past sociocultural situations that can only be reconstructed rather than directly observed or experienced by the researcher” (2012, 63). As will be shown in the paragraphs that follow, the reconstruction of past sociocultural situations to a considerable extent also relies on historical sources in a wider sense, particularly on sources that cannot be considered linguistic records. It is in any case almost trivial to point out that answers provided by historical documents and linguistic records must remain sketchy. One obvious reason is that historical sociolinguistics directs questions at historical documents. These questions, however, were not on the minds of the people who wrote the documents. Research in the field of historical sociolinguistics thus faces the same challenge as historical linguistics in general, that is, to master “the art of making the best use of bad data” (Labov 1994, 11).

## The Spread of Mandarin

It is a widely accepted claim that the use of Mandarin in imperial China was by and large restricted to oral communications among government officials. As Coblin points out, *guanhua* (literally ‘language of officials’) was “the universal standard language or koiné spoken by officials and educated people in traditional China during the Míng (1368–1644) and Qīng (1644–1912) dynasties” (2000, 537). This general explanation prompts several questions. Most importantly, social stratification is never along a clear-cut line separating the world of officials from the world of non-officials, or educated from uneducated people. In imperial China, many members of society were “uneducated” and fully illiterate. Yet there were also members of society who were educated to some degree without being members of officialdom. This leads to the question as to how far the use of Mandarin spread to different social strata. Moreover, competence in Mandarin was determined not only by social factors (degree of education, social contacts), but also by regional factors. For example, it is easily conceivable that Mandarin during the late Ming dynasty was used much more widely in the Nanjing area than in southeastern China, where mutually unintelligible Sinitic varieties are spoken. As pointed out earlier, historical documents do not provide clear answers to these questions. Instead, they provide seemingly contradictory answers. Compare the following quotations from the two Western missionaries: Matteo Ricci (1552–1610) and Walter Henry Medhurst (1796–1857). In 1615, Ricci wrote:

Besides the various dialects of the different provinces, the province vernacular so to speak, there is also a spoken language common to the whole Empire, known as the Quonhoa, an official language for civil and forensic use. . . . The Quonhua dialect is now in vogue among the cultured classes, and is used between strangers and the inhabitants of the province they may visit. With the knowledge of this common language, there really is no necessity for the members of our Society to learn the dialects of the provinces in which they work. A province dialect would not be used in polite society, although the more cultured classes might use it in their home province as a sign of neighborliness, or perhaps outside of the province from a sense of patriotism. This national, official tongue is so commonly used that even the women and children understand it. (Ricci [1615] 1953, 28–29)

The second quotation is from the Protestant missionary Walter Henry Medhurst:

The Mandarin tongue is partially understood throughout the whole Empire, by the better informed part of the inhabitants, and, in some central districts, it is said to be the current language of the people, but, in the southern provinces, the vulgar dialects differ more or less from the Court language, and in Hok-kèèn, where the difference is most marked, the cultivation of the Mandarin tongue is less general. The author, having never visited China, has had little opportunity of conversing with the higher ranks of the Chinese, but from constant intercourse with the middling and lower classes who emigrate to the Eastern Islands, his uniform experience for the last fourteen years has been, that no man in five hundred knows any thing of the Mandarin tongue, or can carry on a conversation of more than ten words in it. (Medhurst 1832, v)

At first glance, Ricci's words seem diametrically opposed to Medhurst's. How should it be possible that in the early seventeenth century, Mandarin was "commonly used," even outside officialdom, and two hundred years later "no man in five hundred knows any thing of the Mandarin tongue"? To be sure, Ricci's claim concerning the widespread use of Mandarin seems to be steeped in wishful thinking, since it was an obvious attempt to legitimize the language policy of the Jesuit Order. This policy followed an explicit decision by Alessandro Valignano (1539–1606), who issued a clear order that the language to be learned was to be Mandarin (Witek 2001, 154; see also Gao 2008; Klöter 2011, 34–35). This policy was reinforced with the establishment of a formal four-year Jesuit language curriculum known as the *ratio studiorum* 'plan of studies', which likewise strengthened the position of Mandarin in the field of pronunciation (for details, see Brockey 2007, 257). When Ricci made his remarks on the widespread use of Mandarin, he had already spent some time in southeastern China. In other words, even if the linguistic setting in Nanjing during the late Ming dynasty supported his claim, his previous experience in the south should have told another story.

## Multilingualism or Min Only? The Sangley Community in Manila

In the paragraphs that follow, I will examine the spread of Mandarin in a Chinese speech community during the seventeenth century. I have chosen the “Sangley community” in Manila mainly because the use and spread of Mandarin among the Sangleys is, at least to a modest degree, documented in historical accounts.

Spain’s colonization of the Philippines in 1565 provided a basis for Chinese trade and settlement (Weightman 1960, 47–64; Wickberg 1965, 3). Wickberg reports that in the early 1570s, the Spaniards “found a small settlement of about 150 Chinese” in the Manila area. Within 30 years, this number had soared to 20,000 (1965, 4–6). In the first decades of the seventeenth century, relations between the Spanish colonizers and the Chinese settlers were marked by hostility. According to Horsley, the Spaniards, less than forty years after their initial settlement, “had formed a pattern of hatred against the Chinese that persisted for more than three centuries” (1950, 1). Wickberg points out that the Chinese outnumbered the Spaniards, who lived in constant fear of an uprising, or even an invasion of troops from China (Wickberg 1999, 188). Yet from an economic perspective, the presence of both Spaniards and Sangleys in Manila was beneficial to both. Each side prospered, and moreover, the Spaniards were able to utilize the presence of Chinese to prepare for an expansion of their mission to the Chinese mainland (see Menegon 2009; Wills 1994). The Chinese migrants traded goods and provided various kinds of services. According to Chia, “the Spanish began very quickly to rely on the Chinese, or Sangleyes, not only for goods from China, but for all kinds of services in the colony. All the craftsmen, storekeepers, unskilled laborers, and most farmers, fishermen, and domestic servants were Chinese” (2006, 515). Wickman writes that the Chinese in the Philippines were “indispensable to local economies and societies” (1999, 187).

There is compelling historical and linguistic evidence that the Sangleys came from the region now known as Fujian province. As Chia points out, different regional origins within Fujian correlated with different professions:

There was a distinction between those from the Zhangzhou area, who were poorer, more apt to get work other than as traders, and more likely to stay in the islands. In contrast, the Quanzhou area natives were more involved in the junk trade, directly or indirectly, and many of them were short-term sojourners. They could come on the junks soon after the Chinese New Year, stay on board or in the *Parián* for a few months while waiting for the *nao* to arrive, and then hope to leave after having finished their business (or arranged to leave it in the hands of brokers) when the south-west monsoon started blowing, at around the same time when another *nao* set sail for Acapulco. (Chia 2006, 522)

In a similar vein, Wickberg argues that in the early period of Chinese settlement in the Philippines, there was a pre-eminence of Zhangzhou people (1999, 187).

The question of regional provenance is obviously related to the question of language use. In a previous study (Klöter 2011, chapter 6), I claimed that the language

spoken by the Sangleys was a contact variety displaying features from the Southern Min Quanzhou and Zhangzhou dialects, and I proposed to label this contact variety Early Manila Hokkien (EMH). My phonological sketch of EMH is based on evidence cited from grammars and dictionaries compiled by Spanish missionaries during the seventeenth century. Other scholars have emphasized the Zhangzhou affinity of the data and consequently treated EMH as a “kind of Zhāngzhōu variety” of Southern Min (Kwok 2018, 53; see also Kwok 2018, 157–59; Ang 2014). Firmer conclusions, however, have thus far not been reached due to two obvious lacunae in research: the utilization of all extant missionary linguistic sources, and a systematic comparison with native Chinese sources of the same period.

It has to be emphasized that the linguistic environment of the Sangley community was more complex than just involving two Southern Min varieties. Social factors such as intermarriage led to contact with native Philippine languages, such as Tagalog. Actually, though, traces of Min–Tagalog contact cannot be found in the grammars and dictionaries written by Spanish missionaries. Since the Sangleys also interacted with Spanish traders and missionaries, and various colonial administrators, it is reasonable to suggest that Spanish–Min language contact must have taken place as well. Except for Southern Min phonetic translations of Spanish Christian terms (cf. Loon 1967), I have not been able to spot any instances of Spanish influence on EMH.

This leads one to ask whether and to what extent Mandarin was part of the Chinese speech community in Manila. In contrast to Spanish and Tagalog, there is no obvious social or historical evidence of a Mandarin presence in a non-Mandarin speech community. To state the obvious, if a language is present in a speech community, it is present through its speakers. If Mandarin was used in Manila, there would have to be evidence today pointing to the presence of Mandarins, that is, officials, merchants, or other persons with a certain level of education. The question goes beyond the mere spread of Mandarin; it is also about the *nature* of the spread in sociolinguistic terms. If Mandarin was spoken among the Sangleys, can the functional division of Mandarin and EMH be analyzed in terms of diglossia? Concretely speaking, is there any historical evidence pointing to the fact that Mandarin was used in domains such as administration or education? This question thus calls for another kind of historical account that does more than merely point out that Mandarin-speakers were part of the Sangley community. If we want to define a historical speech community in terms of diglossia, then we need to identify domains that made a functional distribution into high and low possible, such as the presence of educational or bureaucratic institutions that were controlled by Mandarins. It must be stated from the outset that there is no compelling evidence in support of Mandarin/Hokkien diglossia in the Sangley community based on institutions associated with formal domains. Peng points out that “Chinese education [in the Philippines] did not start until the late nineteenth century” (Peng 2013, 447), and it would be reckless to assume an institutional presence of any kind of *yamen* headed by a Mandarin. Such

# Frontier Mandarins and Lán Mào's *Yùnlüè yìtōng* in the Míng\*

Richard VanNess Simmons

## Introduction

The prestige Mandarin koine known as Guānhuà 官話 is a descendant of the Mandarin dialects of the central plains that were pushed southward in the twelfth century when the Sòng 宋 (960–1279) court vacated the north to escape the Jurchen invasion. The result of this southern migration was that a somewhat evolved version of central plains Mandarin came to be widely spoken in the areas of modern Ānhuī 安徽 and Jiāngsū 江蘇 in the region between the Huái 淮 and Yangtze rivers, the territories from which Zhū Yuánzhāng 朱元璋 (1328–1398) eventually marched forth to expel the Mongol Yuán 元 (1271–1368) dynasty and establish the Míng 明 (1368–1644) dynasty.

Dispersed in large part through the establishment of *jūntún* 軍屯 ‘military villages’ and *wèisuǒ* 衛所 ‘military garrisons,’ the northern Ānhuī–southern Jiāngsū type Mandarin spread into the far reaches of Míng China’s southern territories. This Jiāng-Huái Mandarin also gave rise to Southwestern Mandarin when speakers of the former flooded into Yúnnán and surrounding regions in the early years of the Míng. Much of this population movement resulted from the forced migrations instituted during the Hóngwǔ 洪武 (1368–1398) reign.

Witnesses and evidence for Mandarin in the Míng that shed light on the nature of the language that was making its way into the far reaches of the empire include:

- Long-lasting dialect islands descended from Míng times.
- Contemporary descriptions, such as rime books and rime tables compiled in the Míng on the basis of contemporary pronunciation.

\* Earlier drafts of sections of this chapter were presented at the 225th Meeting of the American Oriental Society in New Orleans, March 13–16, 2015; at the East Asian Studies Seminar in the School of Historical Studies in the Institute for Advanced Studies (IAS) in Princeton on March 30, 2015, where the author was Starr Foundation East Asian Studies Endowment Fund Member in Spring 2015; and at the Workshop on the “History of Colloquial Chinese—Written and Spoken” held at Rutgers University, March 11–12, 2016, that was supported by a generous grant from the Chiang Ching-Kuo (CCK) Foundation. The author is deeply grateful for the support received through the IAS and the CCK Foundation and for the comments and input from colleagues at these various venues.

- Non-Chinese descriptions of Mandarin such as those of Korean scholars and Western missionaries.

Long-lasting dialect islands descended from Míng times include those that developed out of early Míng military settlements. Probably because of the prestige attached to them due to their connection to the broader Mandarin *lingua franca*, the dialects of these islands persisted over the centuries and have been observed and recorded by twentieth-century researchers. Many of the rime books and rime tables that were compiled in the Míng departed sharply from the traditional Middle Chinese *Qièyùn* 切韻 phonology and presented descriptions based on contemporary Míng pronunciation. A particularly early Míng era innovator was Lán Mào 蘭茂 (1397–1476), whose *Yùnlüè yìtōng* 韻畧易通 presents a Míng phonology that itself was probably a southwestern *jūntún* dialect and that has many features found in dialect islands descended from Míng Mandarin.

A highly salient Korean description of early Mandarin essentially contemporaneous with Lán Mào's work is that of Sin Sukcho 申叔舟 (1417–1475), who was a linguist and scholar of Chinese. His work has been extensively studied by Kim Kwangjo (1991) and Coblin (2000a, 2007). Western missionary descriptions do not show up until a century after Lán Mào. The *Xīrú ěrmùzī* 西儒耳目資 'Guide to the eyes and ears of the Western scholar,' by Nicolas Trigault (Chinese name, Jīn Nígé 金尼閣, 1577–1628), is the most thorough Míng era description of Mandarin. Coblin (1997) presents a detailed treatment. The Mandarin described in these sources shares many features with the various types of Mandarin seen in the dialect islands and the *Yùnlüè yìtōng*. Investigating all these diverse types of sources, a picture emerges of the type of Mandarin that was prevalent in the Míng as well as the extent of its reach and some of the changes and developments it went through in the course of its evolution in the fourteenth to sixteenth centuries.

In the present study, we first examine examples of the garrison Mandarin found in dialect islands that originated in the Míng, focusing on some in southeastern China where *jūnhuà* 軍話 'garrison dialect' and *zhènghuà* 正話 'correct speech' are spoken. We then look at the phonology of the Mandarin recorded in the *Yùnlüè yìtōng* in light of what we learn from the dialect islands. This allows us to sketch out the most salient features of the wide-reaching Míng *lingua franca*. At the same time, we are able to illustrate the fuzzy, flexible character of the traditional Guānhuà koine and demonstrate how it was able to achieve a long and venerable life, as well as deep and lasting influence, across China's broad territory even while surrounded by China's innumerable and vastly variant dialects.

## Frontier Mandarins

Many of the long-lasting dialect islands descended from Míng times formed on the outer periphery of the empire. These can be characterized as outlying, or frontier Mandarins. They are Mandarin dialects that are found in regions of China outside

the normal Mandarin territorial range, or Mandarin dialects that are found in actual border regions, or on the periphery of Chinese territory. These dialects all contain features that are generally considered to be Mandarin. They often are a kind of quasi-creole formed from the mixing of disparate dialects; and in their formation they reflect the vicissitudes of Chinese history and population movement. The characterization “quasi-creole” reflects the fact that these dialects usually originated through the mixing of two or more languages; the new mixed forms subsequently became the primary language of succeeding generations.

Having taken root, evolved, and existed in isolation, frontier Mandarins preserve many of the features of their ancestor dialects. They can thus help us better understand the early history of Mandarin and the development of Guānhuà. They confirm the validity of features that are diagnostic for Mandarin affiliation and shed light on what was considered the prestige form of speech in earlier centuries.

Frontier Mandarins include (1) Mandarin dialect islands in non-Mandarin-speaking regions, (2) whole peripheral regions transformed into Mandarin territory, and (3) a mix of the two: islands within transformed regions.

1. Mandarin dialect islands in non-Mandarin-speaking regions include those found in Guǎngdōng, Fújiàn, Hǎinán, Guǎngxī, Shāndōng, and other places. Many of the Mandarin dialect islands originate in the Míng, some even earlier, and include the dialects known as *jūnhuà* and *zhènghuà*. All have some combination of Mandarin characteristics. There are also many dialect islands that are not Mandarin that share similarities to the Mandarin islands with regard to their historical background and formation. But our investigation here focuses specifically on Mandarin dialect islands.

A dramatic example of a major Mandarin dialect island is the old Hángzhōu dialect that originated in the Southern Sòng (1127–1279). It was formed by the massive influx of northern speakers from Kāifēng and the surrounding Central Plains, when the Sòng court retreated south and established their capital in the city. Subsequently the Hángzhōu dialect served as the principal prestige Mandarin behind the rise and formation of the written vernacular known as Báihuà 白話.

2. Whole peripheral Mandarin regions include the dialects spoken in China's southwest and Dōngběi 東北 Mandarin in the northeast. The Mandarin flood into China's southwest happened primarily in the early Míng following resettlement policies instituted by the founding emperor.<sup>1</sup> The Mandarin takeover of the northeast took place at the end of the Qīng and in the early Republican period.<sup>2</sup>

3. Mandarin islands within transformed regions mix Mandarin islands into larger frontier Mandarin regions. Such a situation is found, for example, in the *zhànhuà* 站

1. For extensive discussion of Míng population resettlement, see Cáo Shùjī (1997), esp. pp. 267–320 regarding early Míng population resettlement in the southwest.

2. See Simmons (2016a) for details on the population movement in and out of China's northeast territories in the Míng and the Qīng.



話 ‘station dialect’ islands that formed in the northeast and subsequently were encircled by Dōngběi Mandarin (Simmons 2016a, 61–65).

Considered in terms of their rough dates of formation, in the Sòng we find the formation of the Hángzhōu Mandarin island; in the Míng we find the development of *jūnhuà*, *zhèng huà*, and southwestern Mandarin; and in the Qīng we see the formation of *zhàn huà* and other northeastern migrant Mandarins. Below we look more closely at examples of the frontier Mandarin dialects that formed in the Míng; this provides a rough picture of the geographic range of Mandarin dialects in the dynasty as well as a sense of their shared characteristic features.

### *Jūnhuà* 軍話 and *Zhèng huà* 正話

*Jūnhuà*-type dialects have been characterized in various ways. Pān Jiāyì 潘家懿 identifies them as “creole type dialects in the south that have Mandarin characteristics” (1998, 1). Qiū Xuéqiáng 丘學強 notes that they are “closely related to the garrison communities in the Míng and preserve the characteristics of the Míng koine” (2005, 154). Huáng Xiǎodōng 黃曉東 agrees that they are “dialect islands that formed in military colonies or garrisons in historical times” (2007, 21). Essentially then, the *jūnhuà* that we examine below are Mandarin creoles, *hùnhé xíng yǔyán* 混合型語言, that took form in military garrison communities: Míng garrison Mandarin creoles that formed out of, or in proximity to, the more widely spoken Guānhuà koine.<sup>3</sup>

*Zhèng huà* is a variety of *jūnhuà*, as it also arose in *wèisuǒ* 衛所 garrisons established to guard certain territories. The name is derived from the term *zhèng yīn* 正音 ‘proper pronunciation’, as in *Zhèng yīn shūguǎn* 正音書館 ‘Mandarin Academies’ that were established in the Qīng to train southern exam candidates to speak proper Guānhuà. The Qīng scholar Yú Zhèngxiè 俞正燮 (1775–1840), in his *Guīsì cúngǎo* 癸巳存稿 [Collected writings in the *guīsì* year (1833)], tells us that in 1729 the Yōngzhèng 雍正 emperor (r. 1723–1735) called for the establishment of schools to improve the Mandarin of those in Guǎngdōng and Fújiàn who would sit for exams.<sup>4</sup> These Qīng period academies did not last long and were rather unsuccessful. But the effort illustrates that there was some attempt to teach and promulgate a *zhèng yīn* in

3. A koine, Chinese *tōngyǔ* 通語, is a supra-regional, vernacular language that forms through contact between two or more varieties or dialects of a language that are related or mutually intelligible. Speakers of a koine use the koine language for communication across a broad region and generally do not abandon their own native vernaculars or dialects. Creoles are more geographically confined and have come to serve as the speakers’ native tongue. For further discussion of koines and creoles, see Kerswill (2004); Leonhardt (2013, 26, 45, 50); McWhorter (1998); Siegel (1985); Thomason and Kaufman (1988, 147–66); and Trudgill (1986).

4. “In the sixth year of the Yōngzhèng reign (1729) it was decreed: whereas large numbers of people in Fújiàn and Guǎngdōng are not well versed in Guānhuà, local officials should tutor them; court ministers for a period of eight years are to bar from the examinations any candidates at the ranks of *jǔrén*, *shēngyuán*, *gòngjiān*, and *tóngshēng* who do not know Guānhuà; and in Fújiàn schools to teach correct pronunciation are to be established at locations in all the provincial cities 雍正六年奉：旨以福建、廣東人多不諳官話著，地方官訓導；廷臣議以八年為限，舉人、生員、貢監、童生不諳官話者不准送試；福建省城四門設立正音書館” Yú Zhèngxiè 1833, 9.29b/115.



the south at the time. In reference to southern varieties of Mandarin considered to be *zhèng* ‘proper’, *zhèngyīn* designated Mandarin dialects that were presumably closer to the prestige Guānhuà koine.

Earlier, in the fourteenth century, Zhū Yuánzhāng 朱元璋 (1328–1398), had driven out the Yuán dynasty Mongolian rulers and founded the Míng dynasty. He set up the empire’s capital in Nánjīng in 1368. Nánjīng, and Zhū Yuánzhāng’s native village Zhōnglí 鍾離—modern Fèngyáng 鳳陽 in northeastern Ānhuī—lie within territory where the older, southern type of Mandarin had taken root in the Southern Sòng. Zhū Yuánzhāng subsequently set up a military garrison, *wèisuǒ* 衛所, colony system to consolidate and preserve his command over the vast Chinese territory. In this system, 5,600 imperial troops constituted one *wèi* 衛 and 1,120 soldiers constituted a *suǒ* 所. The descendants of the military colonists had hereditary rights to the land and residences. The system lasted from 1369 to 1410. The *wèisuǒ* system thus was most prominent in the period when the Míng capital was Nánjīng, before it was moved to Běijīng in 1421 (Pān Jiāyì 1998).

The *wèisuǒ* garrison communities gave rise to dialects and creoles that evolved within the motley groups recruited as garrison troops, who were probably from a wide variety of regions and dialect backgrounds. But the officials and military leaders must have all adhered to a general understanding of the common Míng koine language: Guānhuà modeled on the Míng era Southern Mandarin prevalent in Nánjīng and Ānhuī as well as the area of southern Jiāngsū and northern Zhèjiāng. In the early period, buoyed by the prestige of association with Zhū Yuánzhāng and the ruling class, the Mandarin of troops speaking varieties of the Ānhuī and southern Jiāngsū dialects must have been dominant.

Many of the *wèisuǒ* garrison dialects developed into quasi-creoles based loosely on the Guānhuà koine but formed from the mixing of disparate northern dialects and the influence of the surrounding vernaculars. The mixing and creolization were fostered over generations as the hereditary garrison inhabitants intermarried with locals (Pān Jiāyì 1998). As the garrisons comprised discrete communities that were surrounded by other local dialects, eventually the languages spoken within them became well-established creoles and the communities formed dialect islands that were essentially Mandarin outposts.

### ***Zhèng*huà Mandarin Islands in the Huálóu Villages 華樓村**

Chén Yúnlóng (2006) provides a detailed look at a cluster of *zhèng*huà Mandarin dialect islands in Guǎngdōng that originated in the Míng. The dialects that Chén studied are found along the coast of Guǎngdōng in the area of modern Diànbái xiàn 電白縣. In Míng times this had been a garrison community known as Shéndiàn wèi 神電衛 in Gāozhōu fǔ 高州府 that occupied a commanding spot on the Diànbái coastal bay.

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# Index

## Terms

Ānhuī (安徽), 7, 179–82, 186–87, 189–90, 201–2, 220, 224–25, 232

*báihuà* (白話) 2, 89, 222, 225; *báihuàwén* (白話文), 1, 10; Mandarin and, 1, 90, 114

*běifānghuà* (北方話). *See under* Mandarin  
Běijīng (北京), 6, 8–9, 224, 230; dialect, 109, 118, 129, 155–56, 157 table 8.1, 158, 168–69, 195–97, 198 table 11.1, 199, 200, 200 table 11.2, 202; opera, 44, 47, 243

cantillation: contemporary performance of, 15, 18; in Taiwan, 16; phonology of, 22; prolonged syllables in, 23; styles of, 17; tradition of, 16

Cantonese, 15, 36, 225, 227; colloquial, 40, 46, 47, 49, 51; historical background of, 38, 40; Hong Kong, 36–38, 47, 49, 50–51, 53–54, 155; vernacular, 36; wordplay, 52–54; written forms of, 41; Yuè (粵) dialects, 143, 153, 225–26, 240, 241

Cantonese opera, 45–47; Canto-pop and, 50, 51; history of, 48; libretti, 49; post–WWII, 48; sanitation of, 48–49; vernacular and, 40, 48; writing and, 43, 47, 50

Central Plains. *See Zhōngyuán* (中原)

Chángshā (長沙), 137, 153

chanting. *See* cantillation

Chéngdū (成都), 6, 112, 153–54, 157 table 8.1, 158–59, 12–63, 164n23, 165–69

Chóngqing (重慶), 154, 165–66, 168  
classical Chinese, 25, 84, 88–89, 90, 107, 216

code mixing, 36

colloquial Chinese: in dialects, 1; influence on written language, 1, 140, 144; phonetic loaning in, 41; phonology of, 10, 21; post-Táng, 1; reflections of Cantonese in, 39; stories, 106

Common Dialectal Chinese (CDC), 61–64, 88, 118n5, 119, 183–91, 240, 240n, 241, 241n, 243, 250–51, 252, 254 table 14.4, 268, 269 table 15.3, 270–74

dialect performance: cantillation as a form of, 3; Cantonese opera as a form of, 38; Cantonese written vernacular and, 3; female literacy and, 41–42, 43; origins of Cantonese opera, 44–45; vernacular and, 44

dialects, 137; in texts, 3, 5–6, 36; islands, 7–8, 179–90, 220–23, 224, 229, 234, 239, 243; mixing, 4, 37, 61; modern, 142; phonology of, 182–91, 195–203, 221, 225–27, 228–29; prestige, 5–6, 8–9, 10, 121, 221, 222, 224, 225, 244; Shànghǎi, 98, 121; southern, 142; textbooks, 5; written tradition and, 2. *See under* Cantonese: Yuè (粵) dialects; Gàn (贛) dialects; Hakka dialects; Jīn (晉) dialects; Mandarin; Mǐn (閩)

- dialects; Wú (吳) dialects; *Shānyīn* (山陰) dialect  
 diglossia, 36, 216; in the Philippines, 206, 210–11, 215–17; occasional, 211, 215  
 Dōngběi (東北) Mandarin. *See under* Mandarin  
*Dream of Red Mansions*. *See Hónglóu mèng* (紅樓夢)  
*èrhuà* (兒化). *See* rhotacization  
*Fāngyán diàochá zìbiǎo* (方言調查字表), 249, 266  
*fǎnqiè* (反切). *See under Qièyùn* (切韻)  
 finals, 6, 16, 61–62, 63, 119, 156, 156n8, 157, 158, 173–77, 183n7, 186, 187–89, 191, 195–202, 226, 227, 229, 235–36, 237n, 238–42, 242n, 243, 244, 250–51  
 folk literature, 39  
 Fújiàn (福建), 142, 145, 206, 209, 222, 223, 229–32  
 Gàn (贛) dialects, 41n9, 143  
 Guǎngdōng (廣東), 37, 41, 42, 43, 143, 145, 176, 179, 222, 223, 224, 228–29, 240  
 Guǎngxī (廣西), 143, 145, 222  
 Guǎngzhōu (廣州), 44, 49, 153, 181, 225  
 Guānhuà (官話). *See under* Mandarin  
*Guānhuà zhǐnán* (官話指南), 4, 121–22; Běijīng dialect in, 129–30; Mandarin in, 123–24  
*Guide to Guānhuà*. *See Guānhuà zhǐnán* (官話指南)  
*Guide to Kuan Hua*. *See Guānhuà zhǐnán* (官話指南)  
*Guide to the Local Dialect (of Shànghǎi)*. *See Tǔhuà zhǐnán* (土話指南)  
*Guide to the Shànghǎi Dialect*. *See Hùyǔ zhǐnán* (滬語指南)  
 Guizhōu (貴州), 112, 159, 201  
 Hǎinán (海南), 179, 201, 222  
 Hakka dialects, 143, 225–26, 227, 240, 241; Kèjiā (客家) dialects, 41n9  
 Hángzhōu (杭州), 5, 99, 114, 144, 145n, 146, 222–23, 232–33  
*Hànyǔ fāngyán dà cídiǎn* (漢語方言大詞典), 112  
*Hànyǔ fāngyán dìtújí* (漢語方言地圖集), 142  
*Hànyǔ fāngyán tōngyīn* (漢語方言通音). *See* Common Dialectal Chinese  
 Héběi (河北), 89, 249  
 Hénán (河南), 7, 8, 112, 143, 144, 179–92, 195, 230, 235  
 Hokkien dialect. *See under* Mǐn (閩) dialects  
 Hong Kong. *See under* Cantonese dialects  
*Hónglóu mèng* (紅樓夢), 105–6, 107  
*Hóngwǔ* (洪武), 220, 235, 240  
*Huājiān jì* (花箋記), 39–40, 52  
 Húběi (湖北), 112, 143, 180, 181  
 Hú'nán (湖南), 143  
*Hùyǔ zhǐnán* (滬語指南), 4, 121–22; Mandarin in, 127, 135; Shànghǎi dialect in, 133; southern dialects in, 128; Wú (吳) dialects in, 131  
 initials, 9, 18, 19, 22, 101, 110, 113, 119, 155, 156, 157, 157n12, 158, 174–75, 183–86, 188, 189, 190–91, 195–202, 225, 227, 228, 230–31, 233–34, 236–39, 244, 252–54, 259, 260, 263, 264, 268, 269 table 15.3, 270, 272–73  
 Inner Mongolia. *See Nèiménggǔ* (內蒙古)  
 Jiānghuái (江淮) Mandarin. *See under* Mandarin  
 Jiāngsū (江蘇), 7, 112, 116, 118, 146, 153, 179–82, 186–87, 189–90, 194, 201–2, 220, 224, 230, 232  
 Jiāngxī (江西), 142, 143, 145, 181  
 Jìn (晉) dialects, 9, 143, 260  
*Jīn Píng Méi* (金瓶梅): *cíhuà* (詞話), 88; dialects in, 4–5, 94–95, 97, 99–101, 105; dialect mixing in, 104; homophony in, 4, 99, 105, 109–10, 113–14, 116; *Shuǐhú zhuàn* (水滸傳) and, 90–94, 97–98, 99; translation of, 1; typographical discrepancies in, 100–102; vernacular in, 4, 88–90, 96–97; wordplay in, 104–5, 107–8, 110–12, 118

- Jìndài Hànyǔ* (近代漢語), 1  
*Jīnxiāng* (金鄉), 232–34, 239  
*Jìyùn* (集韻), 140, 145n  
*Journey to the West*. See *Xīyóu jì* (西遊記)  
*jùběn* (劇本). See *libretti*  
*jūnhuà* (軍話), 179, 201, 221, 222, 223, 240  
*jūntún* (軍屯), 201, 220, 221, 235  
 Jurchens, 145, 220  
 Jyutping. See *under* transliteration
- Kūnmíng (昆明), 154, 165, 168
- libretti, 42, 44, 47, 49  
*Linguistic atlas of Chinese dialects*. See  
*Hànyǔ fāngyán dìtú jí* (漢語方言地圖集)  
 loanwords, 46, 50, 261; in Cantonese, 46
- Mandarin, 153n1, 154, 215–16, 220, 225;  
*běifānghuà* (北方話), 106; Dōngběi (東北) 222, 223; frontier, 221–23, 243, 238, 243; Guānhuà (官話), 2, 5, 7–10, 44, 153, 173, 175–77, 179, 194, 196, 200, 202, 206, 207–8, 220–22, 224, 227–28, 234–35, 244, 248; Jiānghuái (江淮), 7, 8, 62n, 143, 194, 195, 197, 199–202, 220, 230; koine, 5–8, 10, 145, 173, 179, 194, 199, 202, 207, 220, 221, 223–24, 223n3, 227–28; influence on dialects, 60, 61, 145, 226, 232, 244, 254, 259, 260–64; Modern Standard Chinese, 3, 8–9, 10, 61n1, 123n, 174, 249, 254, 259; Nánpíng (南平), 229–32, 239; officials, 209, 210–12, 215; Old/Early, 1–2; phonology of, 6, 8, 155–58, 164, 195, 200 table 11.2, 220, 230–31, 236–40, 243–44, 268; prestige varieties of, 5–6, 202, 225, 243; Pǔtōnghuà (普通話), 9, 48, 69–70, 153, 162–63, 166n29, 201–2, 259, 260–61; in *Shāngē* (山歌), 59; Southern, 146, 194, 200, 224, 234, 240–41; Southwestern, 143, 220, 241; Western, 153–69, 157n12, 266–74
- medials, 6, 7, 17, 20, 21, 63, 186, 187, 188, 191, 231, 233, 234, 235, 236, 237–39, 244, 249, 254, 259, 260, 263–64
- melisma, 24–25
- Middle Chinese (MC), 1, 9, 156, 187, 195–98, 199, 200 table 11.2, 201–2, 221, 225, 228, 230, 249–51, 254, 254 table 14.4, 272–73
- Mǐn (閩) dialects, 2, 7, 41n9, 73, 143, 179, 210, 214, 225–26, 227, 232, 240, 241; Hokkien dialect, 15, 206, 208, 210, 212, 213–16, 225
- Míng (明) dynasty, 6–8, 38–39, 42, 62n, 65, 82, 84, 89, 104, 107–8, 114–15, 125, 141, 153–54, 162, 165, 173–77, 179, 194–95, 196, 199, 201, 202–3, 207–8, 212, 223–24, 227, 228, 229, 234–35, 239–40, 243, 244
- missionaries: Mandarin and, 6, 154, 156, 157, 159, 160, 160n, 161, 165–68, 214; impact on dialects, 5, 10, 121, 221
- Modern Standard Chinese. See *under* Mandarin
- mùyúgē (木魚歌), 39, 42
- Nánjīng (南京), 6, 7, 9, 115, 154, 155–56, 157 table 8.1, 157n12, 158, 160, 168–69, 181, 194–203, 224, 240, 242
- Nánpíng (南平). See *under* Mandarin
- Nèiménggǔ (內蒙古), 249
- Notitia Linguae Sinicae*, 156n8, 176
- Nǚzhēn (女真). See Jurchens
- overseas Chinese, 7–8, 206–17
- phonology, 15–16; impact on Cantonese opera, 45; of cantillated literature, 22, 25–26
- Píngǎi* (平海), 228–29, 239
- píngshēng* (平聲). See *under* tones
- píngzè* (平仄), 16, 18, 23, 25, 225, 228, 230; prolonged syllables and, 23, 25
- pīnyīn* (拼音). See *under* transliteration
- The Plum in the Golden Vase*. See *Jīn Píng Měi* (金瓶梅)



prestige dialects. *See under* dialects  
 prosody, tonal: prolonged syllables in, 23;  
 syllable length, 22

Pǔtōnghuà (普通話). *See under* Mandarin

Qièyùn (切韻), 21, 174, 195, 221, 235, 237,  
 250–51; fǎnqiè (反切), 46, 174

Qīng (清) dynasty, 7, 10, 38–39, 42, 43, 44,  
 121, 125, 135, 141–44, 153, 153n1,  
 154, 156, 177, 180, 181, 199, 207,  
 222–23, 243

qùshēng (去聲). *See under* tones

Republican period, 44, 142, 143, 144, 222  
 rhotacization, 261

rhyming, accommodated (協韻), 19–20,  
 25

Romance of the Three Kingdoms. *See*  
 Sānguó yǎnyì (三國演義)

Romanization. *See under* transliteration

Rúlín wàishǐ (儒林外史), 106

rùshēng (入聲). *See under* tones

sandhi, tone, 24n

Sānguó yǎnyì (三國演義), 88

Shǎnxī (陝西), 94, 112, 142, 144, 146, 240

Shāndōng (山東), 1, 4, 97, 113, 230; dialects  
 of, 89, 105

Shāngē (山歌), 4, 59, 106; conjunctions  
 in, 73–75; dialects in, 106–7; disposal  
 construction in, 75–76; Guānhuà (官話)  
 in, 81, 84; negative imperative in, 81;  
 passive markers in, 70–73; position and  
 existence markers in, 76–81; pronouns  
 in, 64–68; rhyme in, 61–64; substan-  
 tives in, 68–70; Wú (吳) dialects in, 8,  
 83, 84

Shànghǎi (上海), 153–54, 155; dialects of,  
 5, 89, 90n, 95, 98, 101, 113, 118n4,  
 121–35

shāngshēng (上聲). *See under* tones

Shānxī (山西), 9, 94, 112, 140, 142, 144,  
 146, 240, 248–65

Shānyīn (山陰) dialect, 9, 248–65

Shítóu jì (石頭記). *See* Hónglóu mèng  
 (紅樓夢)

Shuǐhǔ zhuàn (水滸傳), 4, 88, 95–96, 97,  
 107; dialects in 98–99; vernacular in,  
 96–97

shūshēng (舒聲). *See under* tones

Sìchuān (四川), 6, 112, 154, 158n13, 159,  
 160, 165–66, 168

Sòng (宋) dynasty, 137, 143–44, 220, 222,  
 224, 233

súyǔ (俗語), 4, 89–90

Sūzhōu (蘇州), 4, 59, 62–63, 65–66, 70, 81,  
 106–7, 131, 153

taboo words, 109

Tàipíng (太平) Rebellion, 44, 180, 181

Taiwan, 3, 15–26

Táng (唐) dynasty: dialect transcription, 17;  
 literature, 15; phonology, 20; poetry,  
 15, 18; rhyming practice, 21

tones, 16, 189, 191, 197, 198 table 11.1,  
 227, 266; categories of, 9, 17, 21, 23  
 table 1.6, 24 table 1.8; contours of,  
 24, 190–91; non-rù, 187, 189, 191,  
 195, 227, 240, 249, 254–55, 259–61,  
 263–64; píngshēng (平聲), 189, 191,  
 197, 198, 199, 200, 201, 227, 229, 230,  
 233, 234, 237, 239, 243, 249, 254 table  
 14.4, 261, 266, 267, 269 table 15.3,  
 270–74; pitch value of, 268; qùshēng  
 (去聲) 21, 22, 189, 191, 195, 198, 227,  
 229, 230, 233, 234, 237, 239, 249, 254  
 table 14.4, 261, 266, 267, 269 table  
 15.3, 270–74; rùshēng (入聲), 15, 117,  
 157 table 8.1, 187, 189, 191, 195, 197,  
 199, 200, 201, 227, 229, 230, 233, 234,  
 237, 239, 243, 244, 248–65, 268, 269,  
 270–74; shāngshēng (上聲), 21, 22,  
 189, 191, 195, 197, 198, 227, 229, 230,  
 233, 234, 237, 239, 244, 249, 254 table  
 14.4, 261, 266, 267, 269 table 15.3,  
 270–74; shūshēng (舒聲), 249

transliteration, 196, 199, 200, 213–14;

Jyutping, 37, 40, 53; pīnyīn (拼音), 17,  
 61n1, 84, 123n; Romanization, 6, 17,  
 155, 156, 156n8, 164, 195

Tǔhuà zhīnán (土話指南), 4, 121–22;

Shànghǎi dialect in, 126–27, 131–32,

- 133, 135; Wú (吳) dialects in, 129–30, 131
- vernacular: dialects, 3, 36, 225, 232; in literature, 5, 42, 82, 84, 88–90; in opera, 49, 50, 115; written forms of, 36, 38, 45, 51, 54; 104, 105, 106, 118, 177
- Wáng (王), 253, 260, 261, 264
- Water Margin*. See *Shuǐhǔ zhuàn* (水滸傳)
- wèichéng (衛城), 232
- wèisuǒ (衛所), 220, 223, 224, 225, 235; *zhili wèisuǒ* (直隸衛所), 230
- wéndù (文讀), 15, 18; phonology of, 18, 19, 20, 22, 25; in Taiwanese, 25; written Chinese and, 18
- wényán (文言). See classical Chinese
- Wēnzhōu (溫州), 114, 117
- Wú (吳) dialects, 98, 121, 140, 143, 145n, 153, 233, 243; colloquial, 88; dialect mixing, 59, folk songs, 81; homophony in, 60, 81, 109–10, 117; literature, 4–5; wordplay, 59–60, 109–10
- Wùhàn (武漢), 137, 154, 165, 168
- Xī'ān (西安), 112
- Xiāng (湘) dialects, 143, 153
- Xīnjiāng (新疆), 112, 266–74
- Xīrú ěrmùzī (西儒耳目資), 175, 195, 200, 221, 239
- Xīyóu jì (西遊記), 107
- yínsòng (吟誦). See cantillation
- Yuán (元) dynasty, 220, 224, 228, 235, 239; *Yuán qǔ* (元曲), 106
- Yuè (粵) dialects. See under Cantonese
- Yùnlüè yìtōng (韻畧易通), 221, 227, 235–41, 243–44
- Yúnnán (雲南), 8, 201, 220, 235
- zhànhuà (站話), 220, 222–23
- Zhèjiāng (浙江), 5, 7, 118, 142, 144, 145–46, 145n, 153, 179–84, 186–87, 189–90, 224, 232–34
- zhèng huà (正話), 221, 222, 223, 224, 225–27, 229, 232, 234, 240
- Zhōngguó yǔyán dìtújí* (中國語言地圖集), 249
- Zhōngyuán (中原): dialects of, 7, 144, 145–46, 145n, 194–95, 197, 199, 200, 201–2
- Zhōngyuán yīnyùn* (中原音韻), 235, 237–41, 244

## Authors

- Akitani Hiroyuki (秋谷裕幸), 240
- Amundsen, Edward, 166, 166n27
- Ang Ui-jin (洪惟仁), 210
- Bái Jūyì (白居易), 17, 21–22, 27
- Bái Wǎnrú (白宛如), 142n
- Bào Shìjié (鮑士杰), 145n, 180n, 181n2, 192
- Bauer, Robert, 36
- Baxter, William H., 240
- Bernal, Rafael, 211
- Blair, Emma Helen, 211
- Bond, Geo J., 165
- Branner, David Prager, 243
- Brockey, Liam, 208
- Brook, Timothy, 230n6
- Cài Fùwǔ (蔡復午), 141
- Cano, Glòria, 211
- Cáo Shùjī (曹樹基), 180, 222n1
- Cáo Zhìyún (曹志耘), 142, 145n
- Chao, Yuen Ren (趙元任), 160, 268n
- Chén Liánxiāng (陳蓮香), 139n
- Chén Shìyuán (陳士元), 140
- Chén Xiǎo (陳曉), 196
- Chén Yúnlóng (陳雲龍), 224, 225, 226, 240
- Chén Zhāngtài (陳章太), 179
- Chén Zhìchāo (陳智超), 144n
- Chen, Chung-yu (陳重瑜), 229
- Chia, Lucille, 209
- Chow, Chung-yu Chen (陳重瑜). See Chen Chung-yu (陳重瑜)
- Chu, Richard T., 216
- Coblin, W. South, 173n3, 176, 206, 207, 213, 214, 221, 228, 239, 240
- Conde-Silvestre, J. Camilo, 206

- Couvreur, Séraphim, 159
- Dài Bùfán (戴不凡), 99
- Dèng Yīngshù (鄧英樹), 163
- Díaz, Francisco, 175, 176
- Dīng Bāngxīn (丁邦新), 179
- Dīng Fēng (丁鋒), 196, 197n, 198
- Edkins, Joseph, 156n8, 157, 158, 159, 159n, 160, 168
- Endicott, James, 161, 162, 165, 166
- Endo Mitsuaki (遠藤光曉), 196, 197n, 198, 200
- Èrchūn Jūshì (二春居士), 83, 84
- Fasold, Ralph, 215
- Faure, David, 225
- Fei, Faye Chunfang, 242
- Felix, Alfonso, 214
- Féng Mènglóng (馮夢龍), 4, 59, 60, 61, 63, 70, 81, 82, 83, 84, 105, 106, 108, 109, 242
- Ferguson, Charles A., 216
- Fishman, Joshua A., 215
- Fù Chóngjǔ (傅崇矩), 164n23
- Furuya, Akihiro (古屋昭弘), 162
- Gao Yong'an (高永安), 208
- Gě Qīnghuá (葛慶華), 180, 181n4
- Gēng Zhènsēng (耿振生), 195, 235
- Goldsmith, John A., 273
- Gonzalez, Andrew, 214, 215
- Goodrich, L. Carrington, 232
- Grainger, Adam, 158, 161, 162n18, 163, 165
- Guō Lì (郭力), 195
- Guō Xī (郭熙), 180, 181, 187, 191
- Hán Shìqí (韓世琦), 142
- Hanan, Patrick, 104, 106
- Hernández-Campoy, Juan M., 206, 207
- Hirata, Shōji (平田昌司), 153
- Hóng Mài (洪邁), 139
- Hóng Zénán (洪澤南), 17, 18, 27
- Horsley, Margaret Wyant, 209
- Hú Wényīng (胡文英), 141
- Huáng Hóng (黃宏), 144n
- Huáng Jiànbǎo (黃健保), 139n
- Huáng Tíngjiān (黃庭堅), 138, 139, 139n, 143
- Huáng Xiǎodōng (黃曉東), 181, 223
- Huáng Xuězhēn (黃雪貞), 154
- Huáng Zàn (黃瓚), 173
- Huáng Zhàohàn (黃兆漢), 45, 46, 46n, 47
- Hume, Elizabeth, 273
- Hyman, Larry M., 273
- Ingle, James Addison, 165, 166n27, 167n
- Jīn Nígé (金尼閣). *See* Trigault, Nicolas
- Kamiya, Toshio (神谷俊郎), 169n33
- Kaske, Elisabeth, 153
- Kaufman, Terrence, 223n3
- Kerswill, Paul, 223n3
- Kilborn, Omar Leslie, 158, 161, 162, 164, 164n23, 166, 167
- Kim, Kwangjo, 174, 221, 240
- Kim, Youngman, 174
- Klötter, Henning, 208, 209, 212, 214
- Kwan, Uganda Sze Pui (關詩珮 [Guān Shīpèi]), 155n5
- Kwok, Bit-chee, 210
- Labov, William, 202, 207
- Lamarre, Christine, 153, 165n25
- Lán Mào (蘭茂), 221, 235, 236, 236n10, 237, 238, 238n13, 239, 240, 241, 243, 244
- Lánlíng Xiàoxiào Shēng (蘭陵笑笑生), 90, 99, 105, 107
- Ledyard, Gari, 173n2
- Lee, Fabio Yuchung, 212
- Leonhard, Jürgen, 223n3
- Levi, Joseph A., 214
- Lǐ Kāixiān (李開先), 115
- Lǐ Rúlóng (李如龍), 140n, 142n, 179
- Lǐ Shí (李實), 165
- Lǐ Wúwèi (李無), 196
- Lǐ Xīnkú (李新魁), 195
- Lǐ Zhǔn (李準), 112
- Li, Fang-Kuei (李方桂), 159, 174
- Lín Fèngshān (林鳳珊), 46n16

- Líng Méngchū (凌濛初), 82, 84  
 Liú Fǎng (劉昉), 139  
 Liú Fù (劉復), 268n  
 Loon, Piet van der, 210, 216  
 Lǚ Guóyáo (魯國堯), 194  
 Lǚ Shūxiāng (呂叔湘), 145, 146  
 Lù Shiè (陸士諤), 83  
 Lú Zēngfū (盧增夫), 230n6  
 Luó Chángpéi (羅常培), 160
- Mǎ, Zhēn (馬真), 163n22  
 Mài Yún (麥耘), 194, 195  
 Mair, Victor, 38  
 Máo Kūn (毛坤), 159  
 Mateer, Calvin Wilson, 156, 156n9, 157, 157n11  
 McWhorter, John H., 223n3  
 Meadows, Thomas Taylor, 155, 155n5, 155n6  
 Medhurst, Walter Henry, 207, 208  
 Méi Jié (梅節), 100, 101  
 Menegon, Eugenio, 209  
 Mèng Jìyuán (孟濟元), 142n  
 Mèng Yuánlǎo (孟元老), 138, 143, 144n  
 Möllendorff, Paul Georg von, 159  
 Morrison, Robert, 40  
 Murata, Yūjirō (村田雄二郎), 153
- Nakamura, Masakyuki (中村雅之), 155n4  
 Nevius, John Livingstone, 169n34  
 Ní Zhìjiā (倪志佳), 137, 139  
 Níng Jífú (寧忌浮), 195, 200, 239  
 Norman, Jerry, 106, 145, 146, 183n, 232, 240n, 250n, 268n
- Pān Jiāyì (潘家懿), 223, 224, 228  
 Parker, Edward Harper, 166n28  
 Peng, Chia Oai, 210  
 Platt, John, 215  
 Pettus, W. B., 166  
 Pike, Kenneth L., 273  
 Píng huā Zhǔrén (評花主人), 83  
 Prémare, Joseph Henri Marie de, 156n8, 176
- Qián Nányáng (錢南揚), 114, 115  
 Qīu Xuéqiáng (丘學強), 179, 223, 228, 228n  
 Qú Yuán (蘧園), 84
- Ricci, Matteo, 176, 202, 207–8  
 Robertson, James Alexander, 211  
 Rokkaku Tsunehiro (六角恒廣), 196, 202  
 Ruǎn Yǒngméi (阮咏梅), 118n5  
 Ruggieri, Michele, 176
- Sarashina Shinichi (更科慎一), 196  
 Schilling, Natalie, 207  
 Setoguchi Litsuko (瀬戸口律子), 196, 200  
 Shào Jìngmǐn (邵敬敏), 121n  
 Shěn Jǐng (沈璟), 116, 241, 242, 242n17, 243  
 Shěn Míng (沈明), 249  
 Shen, Grant Guangren, 242  
 Shí Fēng (石鋒), 267  
 Shī Nàian (施耐庵), 99  
 Siegel, Jeff, 223n3  
 Simmons, Richard VanNess, 2, 6n, 8, 145n, 156n7, 203, 222n2, 223, 238n12, 260n  
 Sin Sukchu (申叔舟, 1417–1475), 6, 173, 174, 175, 177, 221, 239–40  
 Skinner, G. William, 216  
 Snow, Don, 36n1, 38, 42, 47n, 49  
 Stephenson, Frederic Clarke, 160  
 Stewart, James Livingstone, 167  
 Sūn Yìzhì (孫宜), 195
- Takata, Tokio (高田時雄), 155, 169  
 Táo Huán (陶寰), 129, 130, 133  
 Thomason, Sarah Grey, 223n3  
 Thoms, Peter Perring, 39n4  
 Ting, Pang-hsin. *See* Dīng Bāngxīn (丁邦新)  
 Toqto'a [脫脫 Tuōtuō], 144  
 Trigault, Nicolas [Jīn Nígé 金尼閣], 195, 198, 200, 202, 221, 239  
 Trudgill, Peter, 223n3
- Wade, Thomas Francis, 123, 155, 155n5, 156  
 Walmsley, Lewis C., 166  
 Wáng Gōngxiān (王恭先), 140  
 Wáng Jidé (王驥德), 241, 242–43

- Wáng Yǔchēng (王禹偁), 98  
 Wang, William S-Y, 258  
 Weightman, George Henry, 209  
 Wēn Duānzhèng (溫端政), 232  
 Wetzels, W. Leo, 273  
 Wickberg, Edgar, 209  
 Williams, Samuel Wells, 154, 155, 156  
 Wills, John E., 209, 214  
 Witek John W., 208  
 Wú Chéng'ēn (吳承恩), 141  
 Wú Qītài (吳啟太), 121  
 Wú Xìntiān (吳信天), 84  
 Wúzhōng Pèihéngzǐ (吳中佩蘅子), 82  
  
 Xiāo Xù (蕭旭), 137  
 Xiè Liúwén (謝留文), 140n, 142n  
 Xiè Yùxīn (謝育新), 196, 200  
 Xíng Xiàngdōng (邢向東), 142n  
 Xióng, Jìn (熊進), 163n21  
 Xǔ Bǎohuá (許寶華), 129, 130, 133  
  
 Yán Déliàng (閔德亮), 179, 182n5  
 Yáng Shífēng (楊時逢), 158n13  
 Yáng Zēngwǔ (楊增武), 248, 253, 254, 258, 259, 260, 261, 264  
 Yang, Paul F. M., 176n7  
 Yoshikawa, Masayuki (吉川雅之), 153n1, 155  
 Yóuxì Zhǔrén (遊戲主人), 82, 107  
 Yú Zhèngxiè (俞正燮), 223, 223n4  
 Yuán Jiāhuá (袁家驊), 153n2, 154n  
 Yùchí, Zhìpíng (尉遲治平), 173n2  
  
 Zēng Xiǎoyú (曾曉渝), 195, 196, 200, 201  
 Zhāng Bǐnglín (章炳麟), 137  
 Zhāng Dài (張岱), 140  
 Zhāng Huìyīng (張惠英), 2, 4, 5, 101  
 Zhāng Měilán (張美蘭), 2, 5  
 Zhāng Míngfēi (張冥飛), 89, 9  
 Zhāng Qǐhuàn (張啟煥), 191  
 Zhāng Qīngyuán (張清源), 163  
 Zhāng Shìfāng (張世方), 184  
 Zhāng Sìwéi (張四維), 13  
 Zhāng Wèidōng (張衛東), 194, 195  
 Zhāng Yīzhōu (張一舟), 16  
 Zhāng Yùlái (張玉來), 236n9  
 Zhāng Zìliè (張自烈), 141  
 Zhang, Jie, 249  
 Zhào Yīntáng (趙蔭棠), 236n10  
 Zhèng Gāngzhōng (鄭剛中), 138, 143, 144n  
 Zhèng Yǒngbāng (鄭永邦), 121  
 Zhèng Yǒngxiǎo (鄭永曉), 139n  
 Zhèng-Zhāng Shàngfāng (鄭張尚芳), 137, 181  
 Zhōu Déqīng (周德清), 235  
 Zhōu Lěi (周磊), 272–73  
 Zhōu Yún (周芸), 142n  
 Zhū Xiǎonóng (朱曉農), 194  
 Zhuāng Chūshēng (莊初升), 179  
 Zōng Jìchén (宗績辰), 140