

# Historic Intro of Chinese Phonology

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# Timeline

- Sino-Tibetan language ~6000BC
- Earliest Written Record of Old Chinese ~1250BC (Oracle Bone)
- “Classic of Poetry” 詩經 compiled in 500BC
  - Poems 1000BC-600BC
- Old Chinese until 220AD (Han Dynasty)
- Rhyme book “Qieyun” 切韻 601AD (Sui Dynasty)
  - Fanqie 反切 system of notating pronunciation

# Timeline

- Rhyme book “Guangyun” 廣韻 1008 (Song dynasty)
  - Revision of “Qieyun” 切韻
  - Organized by vowels and consonants
- Divergence of northern and southern dialects
- Rhyme book “Zhongyuanyinyun” 中原音韻 1324 (Yuan dynasty)
  - Recorded the northern dialect

# Modern Dialects

- Wu 吳 (Shanghainese), Min 閩 (Hokkien), Hakka 客家話 diverges around Han dynasty
- Yue 粵 diverges after Tang Dynasty
- Northern dialects diverges after Song Dynasty into Mandarin, Gan 贛, Xiang 湘

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Ref: Wikipedia

# Overview of Phonology of Old Chinese

*i	*ə	*u
*e	*a	*o

- Medial [j], [l], [r], [w]
- Coda [p], [t], [k]
- Coda [m], [n], [ŋ]
- Coda [l], [w], [wk]
- Long/short vowels
  - Maybe?
- No tones
  - Post coda [ʔ], [s]

		Labial	Dental		Palatal [d]	Velar		Laryngeal	
			plain	sibilant		plain	labialized	plain	labialized
Stop or affricate	voiceless	*p	*t	*ts		*k	*k <sup>w</sup>	*ʔ	*ʔ <sup>w</sup>
	aspirate	*p <sup>h</sup>	*t <sup>h</sup>	*ts <sup>h</sup>		*k <sup>h</sup>	*k <sup>wh</sup>	*ʔ	*ʔ <sup>w</sup>
	voiced	*b	*d	*dz		*g	*g <sup>w</sup>	*q <sup>h</sup>	*q <sup>hw</sup>
Nasal	voiceless	*m̥	*n̥			*ŋ̊	*ŋ̊ <sup>w</sup>		
	voiced	*m	*n			*ŋ	*ŋ <sup>w</sup>		
Lateral	voiceless		*l̥						
	voiced		*l						
Fricative or approximant	voiceless		(*r̥)	*s	(*j̊)			*h	*h <sup>w</sup>
	voiced		*r	(*z)	(*j)			(*h)	(*w)

上古漢語 [djaŋs ka:ʔ hna:ns ŋaʔ]

犯我強漢者，雖遠必誅 [bomʔ ŋa:lʔ gaŋ hna:ns tja:ʔ]

[sq<sup>hw</sup>i ɕ<sup>w</sup>anʔ plig to]

# Reconstruction of Middle Chinese Phonology

- Mostly from *Qieyun* 切韻, *Guangyun* 廣韻

# Good Reference in Internet Age

- [ytenx.org](http://ytenx.org)
- Wiktionary