ON THE INFLUENCE OF CHINESE PRESTIGE LANGUAGES ON CHINESE DIALECTS

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INTRODUCTION

The birth and development of regional speech varieties within the Sinitic linguistic area involves the southward spread, in several waves, of Chinese speaking populations from the birthplace of Chinese civilization, supposed to be in the basins of the Wei, Luo, and Middle Yellow rivers, in North Central China, in the area of the modern Shaanxi and Henan provinces (Escure 1997: 127). The earliest wave of immigration south of the Yangtze (Changjiang) took place during the Qin and Han dynasties (221 BC – AD 220) when this area was incorporated into the Sinitic political and cultural sphere in an irrevocable way (Norman 1979: 269).

The second major southbound flow of Chinese people happened after the fall of the Western Jin dynasty in AD 316 when the ruling classes moved in great numbers to the Jiangnan region bringing with them their northern dialect which became the foundation for a new southern literary language during the Southern dynasties (AD 420–589) (Norman 1988: 186). On the whole, however, the years after Han until the beginning of the Sui dynasty (581–618) were marked by political unrest and this period of almost four hundred years of political and cultural disunity has been generally viewed as decisive for the dialectal differentiation of the Sinitic parent language.

During the Tang dynasty (618–907), an influential common vernacular and literary standard arose, based on the dialect of Chang'an. Since dialectal diversification had by this time become fairly considerable, this common colloquial speech variety was generally used as a means of oral communication, while the literary form served as the standard way in which the characters were read (Norman 1988: 186). It has been argued that it is the slightly altered, later form of the Tang standard, developed due to the change of the capital to Kaifeng in the

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Northern Song dynasty (960–1127), which has served as the principal source for the literary layers of modern southern dialects (Pulleyblank 1984: 3–4).

The moving of the capital to the northern site of what today is Beijing in the Yuan dynasty (1271–1368), founded by the Mongols, marked the beginning of yet another common language variety of even greater impact and longer duration, with features from the Sinitic speech form used in the capital area, the impact of which is probably at its strongest today with the officially sanctioned status of its present descendant, the national language, *putonghua.*

Even though the southward spread of Chinese speaking populations meant diversification of the Sinitic parent language, during times of political stability, however, this centrifugal force was counterbalanced, to a variable degree, by the centripetal influence of the various forms of Chinese used in official contexts (Norman 1988: 185). This centripetality is manifested as lexical stratification in dialects, as the process of borrowing from a standard language into non-standard speech varieties has been a characteristic feature throughout Chinese linguistic history, a sign of the respective standard having been held in high regard, worthy of borrowing from.[1] In southern dialects, the borrowing process has been even more complex since in the course of time there has been more than one wave of immigration from the north, each with its linguistic contribution to the local southern varieties so that a particular dialect may have absorbed more than one form from the same etymon. (Norman 1979: 268–269).

At the beginning of the 20th century, after the collapse of the Qing dynasty in 1911, a conscious endeavour in linguistic matters in China began with the efforts of the new government to build a modern China with one common Chinese language. After twenty years of debates it was decided that this common language would be based on the Beijing dialect, called *guóyǔ* (国语, 'national language'), which was to be taught to and learned by everyone. However, there was much dispute as to imposing a single standard at the cost of excluding other varieties. (Escure 1997: 139–140).

After the victory of the Communist party in 1949, the official language policy aiming at a common national language was declared to be part of the goals the Communists had for the reunification, literacy and modernization of China. The new standard was simply called *putonghua* (普通话), 'common language'. It was defined as being founded on the Beijing pronunciation, the Northern Chinese varieties in general and the exemplary literary works written in the modern colloquial as its grammatical model. The complete unification of Sinitic linguistic

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[1] A Chinese exchange student told the undersigned a few years ago that young men in her home town, Xiamen, Fujian province, are especially fond of interspersing their southern Min colloquial with words and expressions from *putonghua.* If true, this is a modern manifestation of this borrowing tendency, very probably not exclusively characteristic of modern Xiamen colloquial speech.

varieties was to be achieved through the promotion of the common language in the cultural and educational systems as well as in all phases of the daily life of the people. (Escure 1997: 140; Ramsey 1987: 14).

As the result of advances within the fields of education and modern technology, China is today in a position where during the latter half of the 20th century, a common linguistic standard has been effectively taught even in the most far-away nooks and corners of the country. One can very well say that at the present time the position of the national language is stabilized and unshakeable. During the fifty years of it being taught at schools all over China, *putonghua* has influenced local dialects to a point where the birth of different sociolects associated with age groups has been observed. The assumed movement toward the standard language amidst younger speakers can plausibly be attributed to its prestige status as the symbol of upward social mobility.

Although this paper basically discusses one single phenomenon, namely the influence of a standard language on non-standard language varieties, it will, however, make a terminological distinction between a historically earlier and a historically later phase of such influence. To refer to the former, the traditional Chinese terminological pair *wén-bái* 文白 'literary/colloquial' will be made use of, in addition to their English equivalents, while in the description of the latter, such auxiliary Chinese terms as 老派 *lǎopài* 'old generation', 中派 *zhōngpài* 'middle generation' and 新派 *xīnpài* 'new generation', will also be adopted.

The purpose of the paper is neither to engage in a detailed discussion on the phonological history of Chinese dialects, nor to ponder over the probable chronology of different literal layers in the same, but, instead, to give a general view, within the Chinese context, of the influence of a standard language on non-standard varieties, so characteristic of Chinese linguistic history, which is basically a history of the spread of northern dialectal features into southern territory, a trend that in modern times is perhaps stronger than ever.

It would be interesting to see the consequences, in this respect, of the present era of stability. Will it last long enough for there to occur more profound linguistic unification of the Sinitic dialects through the adoption of sociolects more and more influenced by the standard; or will it be disrupted, and by analogy with earlier discontinued periods of political unity in Chinese history, leave after it, as linguistic sign of its existence, a distinctly recognizable lexical stratum in the future non-standard dialects?

The reconstructed forms cited in the text are from Pulleyblank (1984; 1991) and Baxter (1992).

EARLIER PRESTIGE INFLUENCE: *wén* AND *bái*

In terms of traditional Chinese phonological thought, the literary and colloquial forms of the same etymon in Chinese dialects can be distinguished from each other by differences in (i) initials, (ii) rhymes and sometimes (iii) tones. The dialect of Lichuan, a Gan variety, spoken in eastern Jiangxi province, and the Meixian dialect, a Hakka speech form, hailing from Guangdong province, may serve as cases in point in this respect in the following sets, with the Lichuan items coming first. Reconstructed Late Middle Chinese (= LMC)[2] forms are provided in parentheses after the Chinese character, which serves as a common semantic denominator for each *wén-bái* pair:

(i)	体 'body' (LMC *tʰiaj*)	突 'to charge' (LMC *tɦut*)
文	t'i^{44}	t'y?^{5}
白	hi^{44}	hy?^{5}
	(Pulleyblank 1991: 305, 311; LFYCD, p. 5)	
	去 'to go' (LMC *kʰiəj/kɦiyə*)	鸟 'bird' (LMC *tiaw*)
文	k'i^{44}	ȵiau^{44}
白	hi^{52}	tiau^{44}
	(Pulleyblank 1991: 261, 225; Yuan 1989: 153)	

(ii)	推 'to push' (LMC *tʰuaj*)	汇 'to gather' (LMC *xɦuaj*)
文	t'y^{22}	fi^{13}
白	hoi^{22}	foi^{13}
	(Pulleyblank 1991: 312, 134; LFYCD, p. 5)	
	平 'flat' (LMC *pɦiajŋ*)	齐 'neat' (LMC *tsɦiaj*)
文	p'in^{11}	ts'i^{11}
白	p'iaŋ^{11}	ts'e^{11}
	(Pulleyblank 1991: 240, 246; Yuan 1989: 153)	

[2] Pulleyblank (1984; 1991) distinguishes two phases in the Middle Chinese period, Late Middle Chinese (= LMC) and Early Middle Chinese (= EMC). As we have already mentioned, the literary layers in all southern dialects are, according to Pulleyblank, derived from what he calls the Song standard, rather than from the earlier Tang variety, both Late Middle Chinese language forms, which with some differences between them, evolved in the area of modern Henan and Shaanxi provinces respectively. The reconstructed LMC forms in this paper relate to the Tang standard as the evidence for the Song variety is too scanty for a reliable reconstruction (Pulleyblank 1984: 3–4).

(iii)	坐 'to sit' (LMC *tsɦuaˋ*)	厚 'thick' (LMC *xɦəwˋ*)
文	t'o^{13}	hɛu^{13}
白	t'o^{22}	hɛu^{22}
	(Pulleyblank 1991: 424, 125; LFYCD, p. 5)	
	重 'heavy' (LMC *trɦiywŋˋ*)	下 'down' (LMC *xɦjaːˋ*)
文	ts'uŋ^{52}	ha^{52}
白	ts'uŋ^{44}	ha^{44}
	(Pulleyblank 1991: 411, 334; Yuan 1989: 153)	

If we look at the initials in (i) and compare them to earlier, reconstructed Sinitic forms, we notice that in the first pair (Lichuan 'body' and 'to charge'), the literal variants show an aspirated alveolar consonant, a sound very similar to the Late Middle Chinese initials, while their colloquial counterparts have glottal fricatives in their stead. In the Hakka pair, the relationship between the *wén* and *bái* forms of 'to go' is similar to the Lichuan cases, an aspirated stop versus a glottal fricative, whereas in 'bird', the colloquial variant seems to have retained the original LMC form, contrary to the literal morpheme that has a palatal nasal as a token of its more northern provenance (*njew*)[3].

If a later form of Middle Chinese is the source for literary variants in southern dialects, then this should be reflected at least in Meixian, which is regarded as belonging to that dialect group (cf. Norman 1988: 182–183, 210). However, only one of the rhymes in the two pairs under (ii) bears direct resemblance to the reconstructed LMC form, and that is the Meixian *bái* variant of 'flat'. Perhaps the monophthongs in the Meixian *wén* items under (ii) are due to the differences mentioned by Pulleyblank (1984: 3–4) to have existed between the two LMC standards, the earlier Tang and the later Song. The Lichuan dialect, for its part, does not belong to what have been considered southern dialects but is a central dialect (Norman 1988: 182–183), so on that basis its literary forms possibly represent yet another, slightly different line of development, but naturally the kind of background suggested for Meixian literary forms could hold for Lichuan, too.

Anyway, the change from a more complex vowel structure to a simpler one in the cases under (ii) must have happened in the time after the heyday of the Tang standard and before the Early Mandarin period, since the EaM forms reconstructed by Pulleyblank (1991: 312, 134, 240, 246) for the syllable morphemes in question consistently have simple vowels, e.g.: *tʂʰuj* 'to push', *xuj* 'to gather', *pʰiŋ* 'flat', *tsʰi* 'neat'. On the other hand, as the evidence available is, as Pulleyblank (1984: 3–4) notes, insufficient for a satisfactory reconstruction of the

[3] This is actually a form of a later period that Pulleyblank (1991: 3–4; 1984: 63) calls Early Mandarin, dating back to the Yuan dynasty.

Song standard so that its vowel structure cannot be ascertained, and as the rhymes of the *wén* items under (ii) bear a closer resemblance to those reconstructed for EaM than to the ones suggested for LMC, then the assumption that the literary forms in (ii) may owe their origin to a prestige language with features more characteristic of Early Mandarin than of LMC, suggests itself.

As far as tones (iii) are concerned, the literary forms in Lichuan and Meixian coincide with *putonghua* in sharing the same tonal category with Late Middle Chinese, while the colloquial forms have switched over to another category (LFYCD, pp. 5–6; Yuan 1989: 153; Pulleyblank 1991: 411, 334).

A change that is extremely general in the phonological history of northern Chinese dialects is palatalization of MC initial velars before high front vowels (*ki-* > *tɕi-*, *xi-* > *ɕi-*, etc.). Consequently, Sinitic varieties, which in their development have not undergone the movement of the tongue towards the hard palate, often distinguish a colloquial variant with a velar initial from a literary one having a palatal consonant. The Shuangfeng dialect, an Old Xiang variety from central parts of Hunan province, and Shanghainese (Jiangsu province) of the Wu dialect group are instances of such historically non-palatalizing speech forms as proved by the first member of the two subsequent *bái-wén* pairs: *ko*^{55} – *tɕio*^{55} 'family' (家) (Yuan 1989), *fio*^{13} – *ɕia*^{34} 'summer' (夏) (Miyata 1988: 157). If the Late Middle Chinese forms of these syllable morphemes, as reconstructed by Pulleyblank (1991: 411, 334), are compared to Early Middle Chinese forms suggested by the same author, we notice the intrusion of a palatal approximant in the former, creating a context amenable to palatalization: LMC *kja:* – EMC *ka:ɨ/kɛ:*; LMC *xɦja:* – EMC *ɣa:ɨ*^{h}*/ɣɛ:*^{h}.

Since literary readings are generally of northern origin within the Chinese dialectal area, their adoption in non-northern Sinitic varieties naturally signifies a convergence, to an extent, of phonological features between different dialects along the lines set by developments in the north, as is evident from the previous cases. A nasalized colloquial rhyme in Shuangfeng, for example, is corresponded by a rhyme with a vowel and a nasal consonant as distinct segmental elements in the literary variant, making the latter look more familiar to those versed in the modern standard language, and in so far as history is concerned, the segmentally distinct rhymes resemble more the ones in Early Mandarin (= EaM) than the ones in Late Middle Chinese, e.g.: *miõ*^{23} – *min*^{23} 'bright' (明) (cf. EaM *miŋ*, LMC *miajŋ*), *ɣõ*^{23} – *ɣin*^{23} 'to go' (行) (cf. EaM *xiŋ*, LMC *xɦja:jŋ*) (Yuan 1989: 116; Pulleyblank 1991: 216, 344). In the same way, in *pio*^{23} – *pi*^{23} 'wall' (壁) (Yuan 1989: 116), the literary reading is a mirror image of EaM *pi*, differing rather clearly from LMC *pjajk* (Pulleyblank 1991: 34). So again, in respect to the literary forms, we are either dealing with borrowings from the Song standard or

perhaps even from a later language variety, with features close to those of Early Mandarin.

In the following Shuangfeng syllable morphemes, the literary form differs from its colloquial counterpart not only in terms of the rhyme — more similar to the one reconstructed for Early Mandarin and the one in modern *putonghua*, at least in the case of 'stone', than to the assumed Late Middle Chinese rhyme – but also in respect to the initial, a retroflex consonant, very much a mark of northern Sinitic influence: *ʈʂi*^{55} – *to*^{23} 'only' (只) (cf. EaM *ʈʂɿ*, LMC *ʈʂɪ*), *ʂi*^{35} – *ɕio*^{35} 'stone' (石) (cf. EaM *ʂi*, LMC *ʂiajk*) (Yuan 1989: 116; Pulleyblank 1991: 404, 283). And a null initial in the literary reading is the thing to be expected in such Shuangfeng *wén-bái* pairs as *mɑ̃*^{21} – *uɑ̃*^{21} 'evening' (晚) (cf. EaM *van*, LMC *ʋjyan/ʋa:n*) as well as *min*^{55} – *uən*^{55} 'mosquito' (蚊) (cf. EaM *vun*, LMC *ʋjyn/ʋun*) (Yuan 1989: 116; Pulleyblank 1991: 317, 323). The bilabial initial of these two forms, part of the syllable structure in the traditional Shuangfeng dialect, is arguably a feature of Early Middle Chinese: cf. *muan*, *mun* (Pulleyblank 1991: 317, 323).

That there should be irregularities in the regional distribution of literary and colloquial variants of syllable morphemes in a local dialect is surely nothing extraordinary, but the fact that variation in this respect can take place within a relatively small area is perhaps something worth taking note of. In the north-western Mandarin dialect of Taiyuan, the capital of Shanxi province, for example, the speech variety in the city proper and the one spoken in the southern suburbs are both characterized by 文白 dichotomy in their syllable morpheme inventory, but not necessarily in the same syllable morphemes. E.g.:

	city proper	**southern suburbs**
	鞋 'shoe' (LMC *xɦja:j*)	
文	ɕie^{11}	—
白	xai^{11}	xai^{11}
	桃 'peach' (LMC *tɦaw*)	
文	t'au^{11}	t'au ^{11}
白	—	tau ^{11}
	匣 'casket' (LMC *xɦja:p*)	
文	ɕiaʔ^{54}	—
白	xaʔ^{54}	xaʔ^{54}

(TFYCD, pp. 4–5; Pulleyblank 1991: 341, 303, 333)

Despite its being counted as a Mandarin dialect presumably not drastically removed, in a historical sense, from that northern Sinitic language variety which, generally speaking, has given rise to the literal forms above, we notice that the colloquial Taiyuan forms in the first and third set above do not have an unvoiced palatal initial, but an unvoiced velar fricative instead. It is possible, of course, that these *bái* items are derived from the LMC form, shown in parentheses, with a palatal approximant in the initial consonant cluster, which approximant has simply been dropped during the derivation process. But, on the other hand, the Early Middle Chinese forms proposed by Pulleyblank (1991: 341, 333) for the syllable morphemes in question do not show palatal approximants at all (cf. EMC *ɣaɨj/ɣɛːj* 'shoe', *ɣaip/ɣɛːp* 'casket'), which suggests the possibility that the modern Taiyuan dialectal forms could historically have more to do with Early Middle Chinese rather than Late Middle Chinese.

On the basis of 'peach', the Taiyuan dialect seems to deviate from the typical Mandarin development in that it has not turned the Early Middle Chinese voiced stop in the *píng* tone in *daw* (Pulleyblank 1991: 303) into a voiceless aspirate (cf. the *wén* form), but has opted for a voiceless non-aspirate instead, which is usually the outcome of this change in non-*píng* tones. With this syllable morpheme it seems that in the language of the city proper, the colloquial variant for 'peach' has been fully replaced by the literal form.

The infiltration of literary variants into non-standard dialects in the course of Sinitic linguistic history has at times lead to a situation where the literary reading has ousted the colloquial variant in one syllable morpheme, while in another the latter has been retained. That is why in the Gan dialect of Nanchang in Jiangxi province, 'to eat, drink, smoke' (吃), for example, is *tɕ'iaʔ*^{5} and not *tɕ'it*^{5}, on the pattern of the colloquial alternative, while 'to kick' (踢) is *t'it*^{5} and not *t'iaʔ*^{5}, in accordance with the literary tradition (NFYCD, p. 16). This type of development is not exclusively the concern of the morphological domain, but relate to the lexicon, too, since monosyllabicity is not an infrequent feature in Sinitic lexical items, not to speak of the possibility for syllable morphemes to appear as constituents in more complex lexemes.

Thus, the adoption of extraneous material in earlier times into the syllable morpheme inventory of various non-standard Sinitic varieties has had consequences in respect to the composition of complex lexemes. In Suzhou, for example, a Wu dialect from Jiangsu province, the character 物 in 物事 'thing' follows the colloquial norm *mɤʔ*^{23} while in 事物 'thing, object' and 物价 'price', it assumes the literary phonological form *vɤʔ*^{23} (Yuan 1989: 69–70). In the following complex lexemes of Meixian Hakka (northern Guangdong province), on the other hand, for the constituents written with 中 and 牲, only the colloquial phonological alternative is allowed in such complex lexemes as *tuŋ*^{52} *sim*^{44}

(lit. *tsuŋ*^{44}) 'centre' (中心) and *t'eu*^{11} *saŋ*^{44} (lit. *sen*^{44}) 'livestock' (头牲) (Yuan 1989: 153; MFYCD, p. 17).

Sometimes the retention of etymologically identical forms has brought about a situation where the meaning of a complex lexeme depends on its assumption of either a colloquial phonological form or a literary reading as a block, as the subsequent disyllabic instances from the southern Min dialect of Xiamen (Amoy), from Fujian province, indicate:

	白	文	
雨水	ho$^{11/21}$ tsui^{53} 'rain water'	u$^{53/55}$ sui^{53}	'the name of a solar term'
大家	ta$^{11/21}$ ke^{55} 'mother-in-law' (XFYCD, p. 19)	tai$^{11/21}$ ka^{55}	'expert'

Furthermore, this dialect possesses curious disyllabic repetitive lexemes where the constituents are represented by the literary and the colloquial forms – in this order – of an etymologically identical syllable morpheme, e.g.: *lak*$^{11/55}$ *lo?*^{55} (落落) 'to lose', *liɔŋ*$^{11/21}$ *liŋ*^{11} (冗冗) 'well-to-do', *k'i?*$^{11/53}$ *k'uat*^{11} (缺缺) 'to lack' (XFYCD, p. 19).

Although many Sinitic speech varieties are affected by the *wén-bái* dichotomy in their lexicon, none of them parallels the complexity of Min dialects in this respect. The regions where these dialects are spoken have constituted, both culturally and geographically, a peripheral area in Chinese history. Thus they have stood outside the principal tendencies in Sinitic linguistic development and have, for example, retained the old Han lexicon better than other dialects. This means that while taking in new items from the various prestigious dialects, they have often managed to retain etymologically identical forms from earlier times, with the result that a single etymon can be represented by two, or even more, chronologically differentiated exponents. In the course of time, the two lexical strata, literary and colloquial, have not been rigorously kept apart so that forms, which originally belonged to the literary sphere, have been adopted into the colloquial language, a situation with parallels elsewhere in Chinese dialects (cf. Nanchang and Suzhou on previous page). (Yuan 1989: 249; Norman 1979: 270.) Such cases of absorption of *wén* items by everyday speech have naturally diminished the distance between the two sociolinguistic registers, literary and colloquial, and have fostered local convergent tendencies toward the dominant northern strain within the Chinese speaking area.

Next we shall survey a case of extensive lexical stratification by having a look at a Sinitic variety with allegedly more than two phonological forms for a historically single syllable morpheme. For this purpose, a representative of the Southern Min group, the dialect of Chaoyang, has been chosen as an exponent.

The distribution of the two registers between the members of a set of Chaoyang syllable morphemes with three different morphs each can be of four different kinds in the present data: (i) two different colloquial forms, one literary form; (ii) one colloquial form, two different literary forms; (iii) three different colloquial forms, and (iv) three different literary forms. As a token of their common origin, the three forms of each specific meaning in the Chaoyang dialect are preceded by the respective character in the following exposition. The mutual order of literary and colloquial forms in (i) and (ii) corresponds to their order in the formulations above:

(i)	明	'bright'	miã^{55}	mẽ^{55}	meŋ^{55}
	私	'private'	sai^{33}	su^{33}	si^{33}
	五	'five'	ŋom^{313}	ŋom^{53}	u^{53}
(ii)	指	'to point'	tsãi^{53}	ki^{53}	tsi^{53}
	虎	'tiger'	hom^{53}	hu^{53}	hu^{33}
	家	'family'	ke^{33}	ka^{33}	kia^{33}
(iii)	模	'pattern'	bou^{55}	mõu^{55}	mõ^{55}
	食	'to eat'	tsiaʔ^{55}	siʔ^{55}	sik^{55}
(iv)	临	'to arrive'	niam^{55}	nim^{55}	lim^{55}
	沉	'to sink'	t'iam^{55}	tim^{55}	t'im^{55}

(Zhang 1979: 264–267)

It is remarkable that there seem to be syllable morphemes with four, or even five or six different forms in the Chaoyang dialect (Zhang 1979: 267). The set of characters with four readings consists of three items altogether, whereas the latter two types are represented by only one single character each in the material at hand. With regard to the register of origin, colloquial or literary, the set with four readings (i) possesses two types, one with three *bái* and one *wén* form, while in the other type both strata are represented by two forms each. With five or six variants per syllable morpheme, the latter (iii) represents an even distribution of forms, while the former (ii) comprises two colloquial and three literary readings. E.g.:

		白			文		
(i)	者	tse^{11}	tse^{53}	tsai^{53}	tsia^{53}		
	方	pŋ^{33}	hŋ^{33}		paŋ^{33}	huaŋ^{33}	
(ii)	落	lauʔ^{11}	loʔ^{55}		lak^{55}	lak^{11}	lok^{55}
(iii)	合	aʔ^{55}	haʔ^{55}	haʔ^{11}	k'ap^{55}	ap^{55}	hap^{55}

As with the dialect of Suzhou above, the various morphs of a syllable morpheme cannot be randomly used in Chaoyang but their appearance tends to be restricted to specific contexts. For example, the distribution of the different readings of 明, in the order exemplified on the previous page, is the following (Zhang 1979: 264, 266–267): 松柏明 'pine torch', 火明 'spark' and 光明 'bright'[4]. The morphs of 指, for their part, appear in 手指 'finger', in 指 as a monosyllabic verb meaning 'to point', and in 戒指 '(finger) ring'. The three presumably colloquial forms under 模 can be found in the following expressions – 指头模 'fingerprint', *mõu*^{55} *mõu*^{55} 'blurred' and 模范 'model' – while those under 临, all of them argued to be of extraneous origin in respect to the basic native syllable morpheme stock in Chaoyang, function as constituents in 临落月 'about to give birth', where 临 can also be realized as *nim*^{55}, and in 光临 'to honour somebody with one's presence'.

Naturally, the six possible readings of 合 tend likewise to be constrained to particular contexts as shown by the subsequent combinations where they are respectively used: 合唔落 'incompatible', 合心 'to be to one's liking', 花合 'metal', *k'ap*^{55} *k'ap*^{55} *nĩ?* 'wink', 合势 'to cater to' and 合拍 'compatible' (Zhang 1979: 267).

Contrary to the circumstances of extensive stratification prevalent in Chaoyang in the present data, circumstances of total convergence seem to obtain in the northern Mandarin variety spoken in the area of Jinan city, situated in central Shandong province, in which the literary pronunciation is close to that in the speech of Beijing, and as the linguistic features adopted by the younger generation (people under forty) in their colloquial tend to coincide with those represented by the Beijing variety, it happens that sometimes the phonological make-ups of the literary form and the colloquial form used by the younger generation in Jinan, are similar (JFYCD, p. 4). For instance, with the syllable morpheme having the meaning 'guest' (客), both the literary reading pronunciation and the modern colloquial form are *k'ə*^{21}. Actually, *k'ə*^{21} is a token of a systematic pattern where a set of items ending in a glottal stop in the parent language (MC *khæk*, Baxter 1992: 771) are corresponded by open syllable forms ending in *-ə* in the Beijing variety, equalled in Jinan by a similar rhyme (*-ə*) on the literary as well as the new colloquial, and *-ei* on the traditional colloquial side. The diphthongized (*-ei*) rhyme is the one found in the older generation's speech. E.g.:

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[4] As the items in which the phonological variants of 明 are exclusively in Chinese characters and as the phonological forms of the characters with which it is in combination are not available for the present purposes, there is no other alternative but to use characters for the whole expressions, respectively. Consistency in using characters also concerns all the examples to be given here, with the exception of two items.

	德 'virtue'	色 'colour'
文	tə^{213}	sə^{213}
白	tei^{213}	sei^{213}

(JFYCD, p. 4)

RECENT PRESTIGE INFLUENCE: SOCIOLECTS RELATING TO AGE

As shown in the previous chapter, Chinese dialects have, during times of political stability, been subjected to the influence of one or more prestige languages, generally characterized by features typical of northern Sinitic varieties. With the Beijing-based *putonghua* as a firmly established national language, the present era should make no exception to this. We should like to argue that the impact of this common koine ought not to be rejected when assessing the possible underlying factors for some recent changes in non-standard Chinese speech forms, without, at the same time, ignoring the probability of parallel incipient tendencies in the dialects themselves. Since we are dealing with synchrony now, these changes can be observed in terms of sociolectal stratification with age as a differentiating factor.

Differentiation into sociolects of the language used in a particular speech community is usually conceived as a two-fold system in the sources consulted: the language typical of the younger generation (新派) and that representative of the older generation (老派). A finer categorization is, however, applied in the descriptions concerning the dialects of Mouping (Shandong province) and Shanghai, of which the latter is described in terms of three sociolects (新派, 中派, 老派) (ShFYCD, pp. 6–9) while the former adds one more to that so as to argue for the existence of four different sociolects within the Mouping community (MoFYCD, pp. 5–6). However, as the depiction of the sociolectal situation in Mouping is too sketchy in the source used as to warrant a clear understanding of the linguistic criteria adopted for the purpose of dividing into two groups the middle-aged portion of the community, it has been deemed advisable to regard Mouping as similar to Shanghai as far as the number of linguistically differentiated age groups is concerned.

A change met in more than one dialect in the present data is the generalization of a prepalatal series of initial consonants (*tɕ*, *tɕ'*, *ɕ*) at the cost of a corresponding apical (*ts*, *ts'*, *s*) or a palatal series (*c*, *c'*, *ç*) in the sociolects of younger speakers in the relevant speech communities. As the first-mentioned series stands in opposition to the others, the loss of the other two naturally leads to the birth of homophonic pairs, as can easily be noted in the subsequent tokens from Mouping (i), a Mandarin dialect hailing from the northeastern tip of Jiaodong peninsula in

Shandong province, Changsha (ii), a New Xiang dialect of the provincial capital of Hunan province, Suzhou (iii) and Shanghai (iv), Wu varieties from Jiangsu:

(i)

	将 'by (etc.)'		姜 'ginger'	齐 'neat'		旗 'flag'	先 'first'		锹 'shovel'
中派	tɕiaŋ^{51}	≠	ciaŋ^{51}	tɕ'i^{53}	≠	c'i^{53}	ɕian^{51}	≠	ɕian^{51}
新派	tɕiaŋ^{51}	=	tɕiaŋ ^{51}	tɕ'i^{53}	=	tɕ'i^{53}	ɕian ^{51}	=	ɕian ^{51}

(MoFYCD, p. 5)

(ii)

	酒 'wine'		久 'long'	妻 'wife'		欺 'to cheat'	西 'west'		希 'to kill'
老派	tsiəu^{41}	≠	tɕiəu^{41}	ts'i^{33}	≠	tɕ'i^{33}	si^{33}	≠	ɕi^{33}
新派	tɕiəu^{41}	=	tɕiəu^{41}	tɕ'i^{33}	=	tɕ'i^{33}	ɕi^{33}	=	ɕi^{33}

(CFYCD, p. 4)

(iii)

	浆 'starch'		姜 'ginger'	千 'thousand'		欺 'to cheat'	箱 'chest'		香 'fragrant'
老派	tsiã^{55}	≠	tɕiã^{55}	ts'iɪ^{55}	≠	tɕ'iɪ^{55}	siã^{55}	≠	ɕiã^{55}
新派	tɕiã^{55}	=	tɕiã^{55}	tɕ'iɪ^{55}	=	tɕ'iɪ^{55}	ɕiã^{55}	=	ɕiã^{55}

(SFYCD 1993: 4)

(iv)

	酒 'wine'		九 'nine'	青 'blue'		轻 'light'	息 'breath'		歇 'to rest'
老派	tsiɤ^{55}	≠	tɕiɤ^{55}	ts'iŋ^{53}	≠	tɕ'iŋ^{53}	sie?^{55}	≠	ɕie?^{55}
中/新派	tɕiɤ^{55}	=	tɕiɤ^{55}	tɕ'iŋ^{53}	=	tɕ'iŋ^{53}	ɕiɪ?^{55}	=	ɕiɪ?^{55}

(ShFYCD, p. 7)

As can be noted, the (中/)新派 doublets quoted here are quite on the pattern of the standard language, in respect to homophony, except for the last pair in the Shanghai set, in which the homophony between the formal exponents of the two meanings 'breath' and 'to rest' are not corresponded by homophonic forms in *putonghua*, as *xī* 'breath' and *xiē* 'to rest' indicate.

Accommodation to the phonology of the national language on the part of the mid- and young generation speakers in the cited dialects is not necessarily the only cause for change since the position before a high front vowel (*i*) is a context amenable to palatalization of apicals and prepalatalization of palatals. But undeniably the simplification process results in an approximation to *putonghua* and perhaps the influence possibly exercised by the common standard in the present case is subconscious, as it is common knowledge concerning language change that movement towards a prestigious speech variety may happen without the speakers being aware of the direction in which their speech is moving. And since we are dealing with age groups that have been exposed to the standard language on a regular basis through the educational system ever since their childhood, it is not

irrational to assume that the official language could very probably be the target of this subconscious movement.

In the dialect of Lichuan, the initial replaced by a prepalatal affricate in words like 'thousand' (千), *tɕ'ien*^{22} in *xīnpài* speech, is not the corresponding apical affricate but the aspirated stop of the apical series, as *t'ien*^{22}, used in *lǎopài* speech, shows (LFYCD, p. 5). Even though here the form adopted by younger speakers is similar to the corresponding *putonghua* lexeme but for the tone pitch, it could be the result of a systematic conclusion of a tendency in the language of Lichuan *lǎopài* speakers whereby the output *tɕ'* of a more or less sporadic addition of a fricative release to an aspirated apical *t'* has become a permanent feature in the phonological system of younger speakers in the appropriate contexts. Being a regular change in the modern Lichuan dialect, the affricativization of the aspirated apical stop before *i* has naturally applied in all contexts that satisfy the necessary conditions, resulting also in forms alien to the phonology of cognates in the national language, owing naturally to developmental divergences in the syllable morpheme stock of the two Chinese varieties. For example, the *xīnpài* form for 'oblique' (斜) is quite regularly *tɕ'ia*^{35} (← *t'ia*^{35} [老派]) (LFYCD, p. 5), obviously not homophonous with *ɕie*^{35}, the corresponding standard Chinese form.

Consequently, we seem to be dealing here with a dialect-internal change rather than an alternation accomplished principally due to extraneous influence, whereby such forms as *tɕ'ien*^{22} among younger speakers incidentally coincide with the exponent of the same etymon in *putonghua*. Yet, it cannot be denied that, though the coincidence seems to be accidental, the change concerned does contribute to convergence between the modern standard language and the Lichuan dialect.

If the changes discussed so far can be regarded as being at least partly motivated by natural phonetic tendencies, a plausible phonetic motivation for a substitution to be completed in the near future in Mouping, concerning the pronunciation of the syllable morpheme meaning 'to produce; product' (产), is difficult to come by, whereby the probability for external influence suggests itself. In this dialect, the dividing line between the traditional pronunciation with a fricative initial (*san*^{213}) and the one with an affricative, "beijingized" initial consonant (*ts'an*^{51}) seems to lie around the age of forty five to fifty as people under it tend to favour the latter while those over fifty are in the habit of keeping the former (MoFYCD, pp. 5–6). Quite unsurprisingly, the age of the speakers who are inclined to apply the affricative pronunciation comprises those who have been subjected to systematic, daily exposure to *putonghua*, both as a school subject and as a medium of education, after the establishment of a nation-wide compulsory educational system in the People's Republic of China.

It seems that the contrary to replacing an apical initial series by a prepalatal one (see pp. 358–359) in a sociolect shared by younger speakers in a community may also happen, as proved by the following forms from a representative of the Gan group, the dialect of Nanchang, the capital of Jiangxi province:

	猪 'pig'	处 'place'	树 'forest'
老派	tɕy^{42}	tɕ'y^{213}	ɕy^{11}
新派	tsu^{42}	ts'u^{213}	su^{11}

(NFYCD, p. 4)

The reversed change of a prepalatal initial into an apical one in the above Nanchang syllable morphemes can perhaps be explained as being a concomitant of the switch from a front to a back vowel in the rhyme, with a less favourable context for palatal sounds as a result. What has caused the vowel change then? When one compares the 新派 forms with the corresponding syllable morphemes in the standard language (*zhū*, *chū*, *shū*), one is tempted to argue for overall influence from that direction on the linguistic habits of younger language users in Nanchang.

The sudden preference by younger speakers in Lichuan, historically a non-palatalizing Gan dialect, for a prepalatal initial instead of the traditional velar sound retained by older Lichuan speakers in morphemes where northern dialects universally show a prepalatal sound, makes one tend to regard impact from the modern standard language as a significant factor in bringing about this difference between the two sociolects proposed for the Lichuan dialect. Thus, by way of the assumed adjustment of younger Lichuan inhabitants to the northern norm in this respect, the velar stop initials are perchance on their way to oblivion in this Gan dialect. E.g.:

	轻 'light'	茄 'eggplant'
老派	k'iaŋ^{22}	k'io^{35}
新派	tɕ'iaŋ^{22}	tɕ'io^{35}

(LFYCD, p. 5)

The new Lichuan variety has also relinquished the final bilabial nasal *-m* in favour of a Beijing type dental *-n*. Note also the prepalatal initial replacing the velar stop in 'metal' in the *xīnpài* form in the following set:

	贪 'to covet'	金 'metal'	
老派	ham^{22}	kim^{22}	
新派	han^{22}	tɕin^{22}	(LFYCD, p. 5)

In addition to the cases just cited, the following exponents of sociolectal differentiation in respect to initial consonants, taken from Jinan, Xi'an and Shanghai dialects, show, in the case of younger speakers, conspicuous points of resemblance with features characteristic of the language form on which *putonghua* is based, so that it is difficult not to accept the possibility of the standard language having served as a model for the alterations that have taken place.

A remarkable difference between the speech of young Jinan speakers as contrasted with that of the older generation is predilection for a null initial consonant by the former against a consistent retention of a velar nasal by the latter in certain syllable morphemes. E.g.:

	爱 'to like'	袄 'jacket'	安 'quiet'
新派	ɛ^{21}	ɔ^{55}	ã^{213}
老派	ŋɛ^{21}	ŋɔ^{55}	ŋã^{213}

(JFYCD, p. 5)

Though the *xīnpài* forms with no initial consonant are in this respect similar to the equivalent standard forms, this change may not have been as drastic as it looks on paper. That is, alternation between forms with a zero initial and those with a velar in the null position may have been a feature of *lǎopài* speech, and perhaps under pressure from the prestigious standard language, younger speakers have opted for variants with a zero initial.

Another prominent phonological difference between the two sociolects in Jinan is embodied in the opposition between a voiced retroflex fricative and a lateral initial consonant, in which the element of the fricative series marks younger speakers who, presumably by the action of *putonghua*, have fricativized the initial. E.g.:

	弱 'weak'	软 'soft'	容 'to hold'
新派	ʐuə^{21}	ʐuã^{55}	ʐuŋ^{42}
老派	luə^{21}	luã^{55}	luŋ^{42}

(JFYCD, p. 5)

Instead of a retroflex series consisting of initial aspirated and non-aspirated affricates, and voiceless and voiced fricatives, shared by *putonghua* and the speech of the younger generation in Xi'an, the capital of Shaanxi province in the northwestern Mandarin dialect area, the traditional Xi'an variety has initial bilabial and labiodental consonants. E.g.:

	猪 'pig'	出 'to go out'	书 'book'	入 'enter'
老派	pfu^{21}	pf'u^{21}	fu^{21}	vu^{21}
新派	tʂu^{21}	tʂ'u^{21}	ʂu^{21}	ʐu^{21}

(XiFYCD, p. 4)

The oldest group of speakers in Shanghai still retain both the voiced and the voiceless bilabial fricatives (*β*, *ɸ*) in their phonemic inventory while the other two groups younger in age have relinquished them in favour of their labiodental equivalents (*v*, *f*). Furthermore, in addition to substituting the latter sounds for the former, the *zhōngpài* and the *xīnpài* speakers have broken down the homophony concurrent in the *lǎopài* set with the mentioned bilabials as initials, by dividing the substituting initial consonant in two, which results in syllable morphemes with initials similar in quality, within the restrictions dictated by the Shanghai two-register tonal system, to the ones in *putonghua* in the corresponding cognates. Note also approximation towards Beijing type rhymes under the sememes 'to return' and 'yellow' in the case of the two younger age groups. E.g.:

	府 'government'		火 'fire'	饭 'meal'		还 'to return'
老派	ɸu^{55}	=	ɸu^{55}	βɛ^{13}	=	βɛ^{13}
中/新派	fu^{34}	≠	hu^{34}	vɛ^{23}	≠	ɦuɛ^{23}

	分 'to divide'		昏 'dim'	房 'room'		黄 'yellow'
老派	ɸəŋ^{53}	=	ɸəŋ^{53}	βɑ̃^{13}	=	βɑ̃^{13}
中/新派	fəŋ^{53}	≠	huəŋ^{53}	vɑ̃^{23} (中)	≠	ɦuɑ^{23} (中)
				vɐ̃^{23} (新)		ɦuɐ̃^{23} (新)

(ShFYCD, pp. 6–7)

A voiced glottal fricative *ɦ* at the onset of some syllable morphemes has tended, presumably under pressure from *putonghua*, to be replaced with *ʑ*, the voiced counterpart to the unvoiced prepalatal fricative *ɕ* in the equivalent cognate forms of the national language, in the speech of Shanghainese teenagers. The voiced quality of the supplanting sound is due to the cited syllable morphemes having lower register tones. E.g.:

	穴 'cave'	行 'to go'	熊 'bear'
老/中派	ɦyɪʔ^{13}	ɦiŋ^{13}	ɦyoŋ^{13}
最新派	ʑyɪʔ^{13}	ʑiŋ^{13}	ʑyoŋ^{13}

(ShFYCD, p. 8)

So far our treatment of sociolectal differentiation in various Sinitic speech varieties has given almost exclusive priority to initial consonants, while the analysis of the rest of the syllable in this respect has been restricted to a couple of passing remarks. Therefore the following few paragraphs will concentrate on bringing up dissimilarities in rhymes as a function of age in Mouping, Luoyang, Xi'an, Taiyuan, Guiyang and Shanghai dialects.

In a set of Mouping items where *lǎopài* and *zhōngpài* speakers consistently have an *-uo* rhyme, *xīnpài* speakers have in some cases substituted *-ə* for it (MoFYCD, p. 5). The distribution of the two rhymes in the speech of the latter seems in many cases to parallel their distribution in the corresponding set in the standard language. The symmetry in segmental structure in this set between *putonghua* and the language of the youth is not complete, however, as shown in the table below by the third item from left, which in the national language is *xə*^{51}. Sometimes the standard and the three sociolects coincide in segmental form, as proved by the items in the last column. However, the substitution by younger Mouping speakers does signify further convergence in form, albeit occasionally, of the two Sinitic language varieties:

	哥 'brother'	可 'to be able'	贺 'to congratulate'	锅 'pot'
老/中派	kuo^{51}	k'uo^{213}	xuo^{131}	kuo^{51}
新派	kə^{51}	k'ə^{213}	xuo^{131}	kuo^{51}

(MoFYCD, p. 5)

In Luoyang, the former imperial capital situated in the western part of Henan province, the speech variety used in the old city itself, the traditional Luoyang dialect of the northern Mandarin group, possesses a suffixal high unrounded back vowel *-ɯ*, as in *xuɐɯ*^{33} 'flower' and *məɯ*^{31} 'door', which corresponds to the retroflex suffix in the Beijing variety, while the language in the suburbs and the vicinity reportedly favours a Beijing-type subsyllabic suffix *-r*, as evidenced by such forms as *tɕ'ir*^{33} 'chicken' and *t'iɐr*^{33} 'day' (LuFYCD, p. 4).

The monophthong in *fi*, *vi* type syllable morphemes in the old Xi'an dialect has been replaced by a diphthong in the new Xi'an colloquial, which makes the changed rhyme similar to the rhyme of the corresponding cognate in *putonghua*. E.g.:

	肥 'fat'	味 'taste'
老派	fi^{24}	vi^{44}
新派	fei^{24}	vei^{44}

(XiFYCD, p. 4)

Contrary to the circumstances in Luoyang, the rolling up of the tongue in a manner reminiscent of the Beijing area when pronouncing such syllable morphemes as 'two' and 'ear', resulting in *ər*, is purportedly the speech norm in Taiyuan city proper, whereas speakers in the southern suburban area tend not to apply retroflex pronunciation in these cases, using a sound more like *æ* instead (TFYCD, p. 5).

Another point of sociolectal divergence in the rhyme structure of the Taiyuan dialect amounts to the separation of the features [+nasal] and [+vocalic] in the speech of younger people into two independent segmental units, which has more Beijing-like items as a result, as proved by the following pairs of syllable morphemes:

	党 'party'	江 'river'	光 'light'
老派	tɒ̃^{11}	tɕiɒ̃^{11}	kuɒ̃^{53}
新派	tɒŋ^{11}	tɕiɒŋ^{53}	kuaŋ^{53}

(TFYCD, pp. 5, 192, 200, 207)

The medial vowel *i* in such syllable morphemes as *kiou*^{53} 'dog' (狗) and *k'iou*^{53} 'mouth' (口) is an index of the traditional Guiyang speech (Guizhou province), of the southwestern Mandarin dialect group, while the *i*-less forms, segmentally similar to the cognates in the national language, are characteristic of the newer Guiyang patois (GFYCD, p. 4).

Traditionally in Guiyang, the syllable morphemes meaning 'fish' (鱼) and 'to move' (移) as well as 'month' (月) and 'leaf' (叶), for instance, have been pairwise homophonic due to the lack of the feature [+round] in the first member of the two pairs, so that they have been pronounced as *i*^{53} and *ie*^{53}, respectively (GFYCD, p. 4–5). The rounding of the close front vowel to *y* in 'fish' and 'month' on the pattern of *putonghua* has been most extensively realized in the speech of younger speakers. But on the whole, there is still vacillation between the non-round and round realizations in such pairs as the above, which presumably points to the fact that this change is still in progress in Guiyang.

Approximation towards the standard language can perhaps be discerned also in the following cases with rhymes ending in *-u* in that language variety (e.g. *liú* [流], *jiǔ* [九], *gǒu* [狗]). Both old and mid-generation speakers in Shanghai usually retain a rhyme ending in a close-mid vowel *-ɤ* in the corresponding cognates, while the youngest among the *xīnpài* users allegedly further add *-u* after *-ɤ*, also an unrounded, only a notch closer back vowel. This additive operation results in rhymes with equally high vocalic endings with standard Chinese forms, differing from them only in terms of lip rounding. E.g.:

	流 'to flow'	九 'nine'	狗 'dog'
老/中派	liɤ^{13}	tɕiɤ^{55}	kɤ^{55}
最新派	liɤɯ^{13}	tɕiɤɯ^{55}	kɤɯ^{55}

(ShFYCD, pp. 7, 194, 190)

The impact of the standard language on the lexicon of Chinese dialects manifests itself in the substitution of a traditional lexeme for one adopted from *putonghua*, usually in the younger speakers' usage. The concept of 'yesterday', for example, is rendered as *iə$^{21/44}$ lɛ* in the traditional Jinan variety while the speakers of the new Jinan colloquial prefer *tsuə^{42} t'iã* instead, a lexeme obviously borrowed from a language variety similar in this respect to the national language (JFYCD, pp. 5, 121, 125). Other instances in this domain are *ʈʂ'aŋ^{42} kuə^{55} – xua$^{213/23}$ ʂəŋ^{213}* 'peanut' and *tiã^{21} paŋ$^{21/44}$ tsi – ʂou^{55} tiã^{21}* 'flashlight', with the exponent of the older variety coming first in each pair (JFYCD, pp. 275, 102, 232, 200). Everybody familiar with *putonghua* cannot fail to notice the resemblance to it in the mentioned lexemes from the *xīnpài* lexicon. Sometimes the *putonghua* lexeme has been accepted in the whole speech community so that in the Jinan patois, independent of the age of the speaker, neither the lexeme for 'I' nor that for 'country' are *ŋə^{55}* and *kuei^{55}* anymore, but *və^{55}* and *kuə^{55}* instead (JFYCD, p. 5).

In the New Xiang dialect of Changsha, the plural forms of personal pronouns in particular show features convergent with the corresponding forms in the national language. These forms are not peculiar to the speech of any specific age group but characteristic of the speech of the whole Changsha community, distinguishing the city area (i) from the surrounding countryside (ii). E.g.:

	1st pl.	2nd pl.	3rd pl.
(i)	ŋo^{41} mən	ȵi^{41} mən	t'a^{33} mən
(ii)	ŋəu^{24} u^{24} li *or* ŋəu^{24} li	ȵiəu^{24} u^{24} li *or* ȵiəu^{24} li	t'əu^{24} u^{24} li *or* t'əu^{24} li

(CFYCD, p. 4)

Similarly to initials, a change in a rhyme between sociolects may lead to accidental convergence of dialectal forms with those of the standard language in one but not in another instance, depending on the degree of formal coincidence between the exponents of the same etymon in *putonghua* and, in this case, the Mouping dialect. That is, the oldest among Mouping dwellers have retained two rhymes, *-yə* and *-yuo*, in order to distinguish syllable morphemes from each other, while middle-aged and younger inhabitants have totally ousted the latter in favour

of the former, giving occasionally rise to Beijing-type homophony, as proved by the second pair below:

	说 'to say'		削 'to peel'	月 'month'		乐 'music'
最老派	cyə^{213}	≠	cyuo^{213}	yə^{213}	≠	yuo^{213}
中/新派	cyə^{213}	=	cyə^{213}	yə^{213}	=	yə^{213}

(MoFYCD, p. 5)

Naturally, it is not always the case that a speech variety attributed to younger speakers necessarily equals phonological approximation toward the standard language. Evidence of such development is offered by the new Changsha colloquial where the retroflex series *tʂ, tʂʻ, ʂ*, which in the older variety, in a way similar to the standard language, stands in opposition to the corresponding non-retroflex set *ts, tsʻ, s*, has been lost in favour of the latter series (CFYCD, pp. 3–4). This signifies homophonization of the syllable morphemes, kept apart in *putonghua*, referring to such concepts as 'to know' (知) and 'expenses' (资) = *tsɨ^{33}*, 'prosperous' (昌) and 'storehouse' (仓) = *tsʻaŋ^{33}* as well as 'to receive' (收) and 'to search' (搜) = *səu^{33}*, for instance.

Moreover, the rhymes, which in *putonghua* are *-oŋ* and *-ioŋ*, are formally better matched by cognate syllable morphemes in the old Changsha variety, whereas the *xīnpài* speech has, in the relevant cases, drawn further away from the Beijing-based standard, as proved by the following items:

	东 'east'	红 'red'	雄 'grand'
老派	toŋ^{33}	xoŋ^{13}	ioŋ^{13}
新派	tən^{33}	xən^{13}	ɕin^{13}

(CFYCD, p. 4)

The Wenzhou dialect of the Wu group from Zhejiang province seems to resemble the Changsha dialect above in having the same kind of relationship between its two sociolectal varieties, *lǎopài* and *xīnpài*, and the standard language. That is, if any closer formal parallels on the segmental level with *putonghua* can at all be detected, they are to be found in *lǎopài* forms rather than *xīnpài* items, as anyone familiar with the standard language may notice. This naturally means that the rules implementing the changes, which separate the latter from the former, have been systemically realized in all the contexts that have provided the appropriate conditions for them to apply, irrespective of the formal prerequisites of the corresponding forms in *putonghua*. In the subsequent sets of examples, (i) concerns the initial, (ii) the rhyme in 'rain', and (iii) relates to whole forms. E.g.:

(i)	风 'wind'	房 'room'
老派	foŋ^{33}	vuɔ^{11}
新派	hoŋ^{33}	ɦuɔ^{11}
	(WFYCD, p. 6)	

(ii)	雨 'rain'	威 'strength'
老派	jy^{24}	y^{31}
新派	vu^{24}	u^{31}
	(WFYCD, p. 6)	

(iii)	险 'danger'	烟 'smoke'
老派	ɕie^{35}	ie^{33}
新派	ɕi^{35}	i^{33}
	(WFYCD, p. 7)	

The cases of 'head' and 'bean', which give the impression of the respective Wenzhou *xīnpài* forms being closer to the standard *tóu* and *dòu* in sharing the backness of the constitutive vowels in the rhyme, are counterbalanced by other syllable morphemes in the table below, in which the *lǎopài* variant is an exact segmental copy of the corresponding standard form. E.g.:

	头 'head'	豆 'bean'	流 'to flow'	柳 'willow'	六 'six'
老派	diu^{31}	diu^{11}	liu^{31}	liu^{24}	liu^{212}
新派	dɤu^{31}	dɤu^{11}	lɤu^{31}	lɤu^{24}	lɤu^{212}
	(WFYCD, p. 6)				

In the subsequent instances from the Taiyuan dialect, in which the initial voiced velar fricative used by the older speakers has been replaced by a velar nasal initial in the younger age group's speech, neither the *lǎopài* nor *xīnpài* forms can be said to resemble better their etymological equivalents in *putonghua*. E.g.:

	安 'peaceful'	我 'I'	袄 'jacket'
老派	ɣæ̃^{11}	ɣɤ^{53}	ɣau^{53}
新派	ŋæ̃^{11}	ŋɤ^{53}	ŋau^{53}
	(TFYCD, pp. 5, 137, 66, 182)		

Incidentally, the Taiyuan forms with an initial *ŋ* do bear resemblance to standard forms, not, however, to those in the modern official language, but to the forms accepted by an older norm of official pronunciation. This norm was a cross-dialectal compromise devised in the early years of the republican government

(Norman 1988: 254–255), one feature of which was the possibility to have an initial velar nasal in some cases where the modern *putonghua* has a null initial. Mathews' Chinese-English dictionary, for example, first published in 1931, still records *ngo* as a possible official form for the first person singular pronoun 'I', alongside with *o* (= *wǒ* in pinyin) (Mathews 1975: 664).

Actually, one does not have to look to Chinese varieties far away from the capital area in order to find forms with nasal initials where the modern standard language has a null initial, since quite at the doorstep of Beijing, in the colloquial variety spoken in its suburbs, syllable morphemes with velar *ŋ* or alveolar nasal *n* have been reported for such syllable morphemes as 'quiet' and 'shore', for instance (HFYCD, p. 8). As a reflection of the earlier pronunciation norm mentioned in the previous paragraph, Mathews' Chinese-English Dictionary also records a nasal variant *ngan* for the latter meaning but no such alternative has been given for the former (Mathews 1975: 4, 7), which could be due to the fact that in the case of 'quiet' and 'shore', as well as in that of the first person singular pronoun, the distribution of the velar nasal initial in the early standard pronunciation seems to correspond to that of Middle Chinese initial *ng* as attested by such reconstructed forms as 安 *ʔan*, 岸 *nganH* and 我 *ngaX* (Baxter 1992: 745, 795). But generally, with regard to initial *ŋ* in modern Mandarin dialects, it has been argued that it does not reflect MC *ng* but represents an automatic onset in syllable morphemes that earlier had a null initial (Norman 1988: 193).

Consequently, it seems obvious that, contrary to many other cases treated in this chapter, the differences between the two sociolects in Changsha, Wenzhou and Taiyuan dialects, beginning with the loss of the retroflex series *tʂ, tʂʻ, ʂ* in Changsha, constitute instances of dialect-internal developments free of outside influence, at least from the official language, the result of which is not convergence, not even accidental, between *putonghua* and the concerned dialects, but rather further divergence between the two.

CONCLUSION

Our survey of the signs of earlier influence from an official or prestigious Chinese variety on the Chinese dialects represented in the data, besideS confirming the overall resemblance to the features of the north-based LMC language variety, seems to corroborate the fact that it must be the later LMC variety, Pulleyblank's Song standard, rather than the earlier variety (Tang), which has served as the source for literary borrowings. It was also proposed, on the basis of striking similarities between the literary and the reconstructed Early Mandarin forms in the corpus at hand, that perhaps the role of this still later language, or a language variety close to it in features, as the prestige language borrowed from, should not

be totally excluded from consideration. Moreover, we should, on the strength of the evidence provided by the dialects of Lichuan (Gan) and Shuangfeng (Old Xiang) in the present data, like to tentatively argue that possibly the influence of Song (/Early Mandarin?) prestige was not restricted to the southern dialects as defined by Norman (1988: 182–183, 210), but that it could have extended its impact to areas where contemporaneous forms, of what today are called "central dialects" (Norman 1988: 182–183), were spoken.

As far as modern developments are concerned, there seem to be two types of convergence with the forms of the modern standard language in Chinese non-standard varieties in the present corpus: accidental and intentional convergence. In addition to the cases where the influence from *putonghua* suggests itself as a plausible explanation for the differences between *lǎopài* and *xīnpài* speakers, we also noted the possibility of a subconscious effort towards formal imitation of the national language on the part of the speakers of non-standard dialects, which, if accepted, would certainly make it sometimes well-nigh impossible to distinguish with certainty between cases due to accidental coincidence and those owing to subconscious intentional aim at formal approximation, if attempts at such distinctions were ever deemed necessary. But in either case, be the change considered less intentional or more intentional, the net result amounts to increased formal similarity with the national language.

We also noticed, however, that changes in the language of younger speakers in a speech community do not automatically imply more likeness with *putonghua*, but sometimes even the contrary, as the regular implementation of some changes within the relevant linguistic systems has lead to formal alienation from it.

But all in all, one may predict that, provided the present era of stability is not disrupted by social unrest, we will see further "standardization" of non-standard Chinese varieties in the future. Of course, there will hardly ever be total convergence of the Sinitic linguistic area, but linguistic unification will certainly happen in the form of the birth of local, more and more "putonghua-coloured" colloquials all over China.

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