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Genealogical Research on Chinese Names: An Annotated Bibliography

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Introduction

The Chinese people possess the oldest and richest genealogical tradition in the world. Family names were created and used by the Chinese people about 2,800 years ago during the Three Dynasties, namely, Hsia, Shang, and Chou. Genealogical roots are found in the preoccupation with their ancestors of the modern Chinese as evidenced in the oracle bone inscriptions of the Shang Period (ca. 1765-1123 B.C.). Following the Chou conquest of the Shang around 1122 B.C., genealogical history and tradition flourished and was preserved by the government of the Chou with records of the emperors, lords, and officials.

Genealogical records have always been cherished by mankind, both in ancient and in modern society. To a Chinese, a surname is not only a means of identification, but also signifies a bond with others of the same surname, whether or not there is any immediate relationship. A name traced not only a person’s blood relatives and his generation within a family but also his social status and rank within his community.

Genealogical records were preserved in written form from very early times. There is a great deal of enthusiasm for genealogical research on Chinese surnames. Most of the documents of this research were written in vernacular form; without the ability to read the Chinese language, these valuable resources would be impossible to access by western scholars.

So far, no extensive annotated bibliography has been compiled on this subject, collecting publications in both the English and Chinese languages. For the purpose of assisting East Asian researchers, librarians, bibliographers, students, and scholars in working in genealogical research on Chinese names, this bibliography is offered as a reference tool. All published works in English or Chinese were eligible for inclusion—books, articles, bibliographies, dictionaries, yearbooks, periodicals, and monographs; preference was, however, given to publications of an academic rather than a popular nature.

This annotated bibliography provides coverage of materials from the period between 1980 and 1995 and also includes important works of historical value published before 1980. The Wade-Giles system is used for the transliteration of Chinese materials. English publications that include Chinese characters transliterated by the author have those transliterations retained in the bibliographical annotations. For convenience, the vernacular forms of the Chinese personal names that appear in the bibliographical citations have been given in East Asian order (i.e., family names followed by first names) rather than in western order (i.e., first and middle names followed by family names). There are nearly 220 annotated citations in this bibliography; 162 of them are in Chinese and 55 in English.

Certain materials may have been omitted because the author is unaware of their existence or availability here in the United States. A great portion of the Chinese-language publications was found in the collection of Columbia University’s C. V. Starr East Asian Library.

I would appreciate the reader’s comments and suggestions for adding more books and articles to this bibliography which will form part of a book on the same subject to be published in the near future.
Chinese Language Publications


Analysis of personal names originating in the Han and Wei dynasties. Primary emphasis is on the explanation of factors which contribute to the naming pattern in these dynasties. The book also includes genealogical tables of the emperors of the Han and Wei dynasties. Of general and scholarly use.


Catalog of genealogical collections in public libraries in Taiwan.


This book shows you how to choose an auspicious Chinese name for your children according to the name’s number of strokes, its meaning and origin, Chinese yin 陰 (female) and yang 陽 (male), wu hsing 五行 (five forces), pa tzu 八字 (eight characters), rhyme, and shape. A list of suggested names is provided and analyzed by the criteria given. For general readers.


Index to pseudonyms. The book is arranged by the number of strokes and then by traditional stroke order. The work contains two parts: a personal name index and a pseudonym index. For general reference on modern Chinese authors.


A list of taboo names from each dynasty. The book contains a compilation of characters, arranged by the rhymes of Chinese sounds, of limited or restricted use. Reasons for their restricted use include: conflict on sound, rhyme, place name, official rank, or total number of strokes with the names of Chinese emperors and government officials.


A branch genealogy of the Chang family.


The genealogical history of the Chao family. Traces historical lineage of contemporary Chao
families in Taiwan and includes a collection of photos of Chao family members.


This dictionary contains over 4,000 names of Chinese authors compiled by Mr. Chen from international works published prior to 1970. Arranged alphabetically by Chinese surname in romanized form, the dictionary carries biographical records of authors with their Chinese names, birth and death dates, and the author’s works listed in their original titles. A contribution of western scholarship on China. For both advanced scholars and students of Oriental studies.


Introduction to Chinese genealogy including history, origin, and a step-by-step guide to tracing your own family history. For general use.


A comprehensive multilineage genealogy of the Ch‘en family. The family ranks as the largest of families in the population of Taiwan.


More than 400 commonly used Chinese surnames are introduced in this book. For general use.


The genealogy of the I-men Ch‘en clan from Chiang-chou, China. Traces the genealogical history of the Ch‘en family from the founder, Yü-ti Shun (accessed 2255 B.C.) to the ninety-first generation of his descendants in the Ming dynasty (A.D. 1368-1628).


Catalog of Chinese genealogies in Taiwan. The volume contains 10,613 items on genealogical subjects. It covers records collected in Taiwan between 1975 and 1985 as the result of the Genealogical Society of Utah’s “Taiwan Project.” Comprehensive. For scholarly research and general use.


Dictionary of Chinese surnames. The authors have collected more than 5,600 ancient and modern Chinese names including single and compound surnames. The book is arranged alphabetically according to *Hanyu pinyin*. For general use.

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This book is a joint publication of the author's two works: *Pieh hao so yin* 別號索引 and *Shih ming so yin* 室名索引. Suitable for consultation by historians, librarians, genealogists, and scholars. The coverage of this book is from the Legendary Period to the Ming dynasty.

—. *Pieh hao so yin* 別號索引. Shanghai: K'ai ming shu tien, 1943.

Index to anonyms, pseudonyms, and nicknames of ancient Chinese politicians, soldiers, poets, emperors, government officials, and so on. Arranged according to stroke order, each pseudonym, or *hao*, refers to the person's real name by which he is identified in literature and includes the dynasty the person belongs to and the province where the person was born. For reference use.

—. *Shih ming so yin* 室名索引. Shanghai: K'ai ming shu tien, 1934.

Index to the "house name" or "ancestral name" of ancient Chinese politicians, soldiers, poets, emperors, and government officials. More than 5,000 personal names were indexed in this book. For reference use.

Ch'en, Shao-hsing 陈昭馨 and Morton H. Fried. *The distribution of family names in Taiwan.* T'ai-pei: Department of Sociology, College of Law, National Taiwan University; New York: Department of Anthropology, Columbia University, East Asian Institute, 1968.

This book presents raw data compiled from records of the 1956 Taiwan census. It covers the distribution of surnames in Taiwan by townships and prefectures. Suitable for population statistics and surname distribution analysis in Taiwan.


This three-volume set contains a collection of 3,625 names including 2,179 single syllable and 1,446 multisyllable surnames. The set is divided into ten chapters and arranged by the pronunciation of the names and stroke order. The contents of the set is quite comprehensive. Each name includes the description of its origin, references which trace the derivation of the name, and historical persons with that name. For general and scholarly use.


Index of nicknames, pen names, *tzu* and *hao* of ancient and modern Chinese literary authors. The book indexes over 70,000 pen names from the T'ang dynasty to the Republican era. For scholars of Chinese literary studies.


Directory of party and government officials of Communist China. A collection of 192 persons is included in this directory. The volume contains not only indexes to pen names, assumed names,
tzu hao, anonyms, and pseudonyms of these persons but also detailed descriptions of their political histories. For general reference.


A concise biographical dictionary of Chinese nicknames. The volume covers the period from 1840 to 1949 and includes persons from the fields of politics, education, science, the military, medicine, journalism, literature, and religion as well as government officials and emperors of the Ch’ing dynasty. It covers a total of 10,112 biographical descriptions. The book is arranged according to stroke order by personal name. For research use by scholars and historians of Chinese studies.


Genealogical history of the Ch’en family who relocated from several villages in An-hui, Ho-fei hsien to Taiwan. A total number of thirty-four generations are traced in this book.

Chi-yang K’o Ts’ai shih tsu p’u 池陽柯蔡氏大族譜. Kao-hsiung: K’o Ts’ai tsung ch’in tsu p’u pien chi pu, 1974.

Covers the genealogical history of the K’o and Ts’ai families living in Taiwan.


Traces the author’s own genealogical origins from the first to the tenth generations. This book is the result of the author’s forty years of research on the origins of his family.


Includes multilinage genealogies of the Ch’eng family who moved to Taiwan from Fu-ning hsien in Chiang-su province in China.


Traces the origin of the Chiao family. The book contains multilinage genealogies of the Chiao family now living in Taiwan.


Traces the descendants of the Chien family living in Taiwan.

Ch’ih-shan Chang shih tsu p’u 赤山張氏族譜. T’ai-chung: Chung-hua min tsu p’u hsi yen chiu chung hsin, [19--]

Contains macro registers of the descendants of the Chang family living in Taiwan.


This Chinese-English publication was compiled by the twenty-seventh generation descendant of
the Chin clan from K’u-ch’ung village of Chung-shan district of Kuang-tung province in China. The volume traces the genealogies of this Chin family whose heritage goes back nearly 800 years.

**Chin-shui Huang shih tsu p’u** 金水黃氏族譜. Chin-men: Chin-shui Huang shih ta tsung pien yin, 1983.

Covers the complete genealogical history of the Huang family who originated in Chin-shui, Chin-men hsien in Taiwan.


A comprehensive genealogical register that traces the Hsu family from its origins to the twenty-third generation.

**Ch’ing tai shu hua chia tsu hao yin te** = *Index to the fancy names of the calligraphers and painters of the Ch’ing dynasty*. T’ai-pei: s.n., 1966.

An index to the names of 5,787 Chinese painters and calligraphers. This volume contains two parts. Part one is an index to personal names and part two is an index to pseudonyms. For general and scholarly use.


Describes the clan history and genealogy of the Ch’iu family in Taiwan.

**Chou, Ch’ing-i 周慶義 and Chou Chin 周瑾. Hsueh shih chia tsu jen wu chih 薛氏家譜人物志.** T’ai-yuan: Shan-hsi jen min ch’u pan she, 1990.

Describes the prominent figures of the descendants of the Hsueh family in Chinese history. The book is arranged chronologically from the Legendary Period to the Ch’ing dynasty.


Multilineage genealogies of surnames. A total of 5,300 names is collected in this book, including 3,200 one-syllable, 2,000 two-syllable 120 three-syllable, 6 four-syllable, and 2 five-syllable surnames. For both general and scholarly use.


An introduction to Chinese surnames, including a detailed description of the origin of each name arranged by the four-corner system. A useful bibliography for consultation and further research on the subject of Chinese names is included. One drawback of this book is the use of the four-corner system, one not popularly in use. For scholarly use.
Chung-hua hsing shih yuan liu t'ang hao k'ao 中華姓氏源流堂號考. T'ai-pei: Chung-kuo ming jen chuan chi chung hsin, 1985.

Presents the lineages of Chinese surnames. Traces the most frequently appearing 100 surnames in Taiwan. The most interesting part of this book is its guide to step-by-step tracing of your own family tree. It provides genealogical forms for personal use. For use in tracing your ancestors.

Chung-kuo hsing shih hui pien 中國姓氏匯編. Pei-ching: Jen min yu tien ch'u pan she, 1984.

A compact dictionary of Chinese surnames in both Hanyu pinyin and Mandarin pronunciation. This volume collects a total of 5,730 surnames including 3,470 single-syllable names, 2,085 two-syllable names, 163 three-syllable names, 9 four-syllable names, and 3 five-syllable names. For general reference.


Chinese surname registers. Volume one covers the origin of the 290 most frequently used names. Volume two details less frequently used surnames. The description of each surname is quite comprehensive, including the name's historical background, its predominant use in Chinese provinces, and the name's usage as distributed in various areas in Taiwan. The major drawback of this book is its random arrangement which makes searching for a particular name quite difficult. For general reference.


Chinese biographical dictionary. The volume collects over 40,000 names including people from the Legendary Period to the Ch'ing dynasty. For general reference.


Includes a list of nearly 2,200 Chinese surnames and correspondent transliterations in Wade-Giles. The list was compiled from two major books of authority on Chinese surnames: Pai chia hsing 百家姓 and Ku chin t'u shu chi ch'eng 古今圖書集成.


Describes the clan history and genealogy of the Fan family in Taiwan.


The Chou dynasty plays a major role in the origin of Chinese surnames. Its naming system is closely connected with its social structure and politics. This book analyzes the separation of hsing and shih in the Chou dynasty and traces the names originating in and commonly used in the dynasty. For general or scholarly use.
The sixtieth anniversary publication of the Che Yong Cua & Chua Association. The association, established in Manila in the early 1990s, was a center for connecting the K'o and Ts'ai families living in the Philippines and Taiwan. This book contains a directory of the descendants of these two families and furnishes family group pictures taken of their social gatherings.

Transcribes the genealogical history of the Ho family who settled in Feng-ch'i, located in Hui-an hsien in Fu-chien province. The compiler of this volume is in the twenty-first generation of the family.

This book was compiled by the descendants of the Lin family living in Taiwan. They originated in Yung-ch'un, Fu-chien province.

Traces the genealogical history of the Han, Ho, and Lan families.

Traces the genealogical origins of the Ch'en family and includes descriptions of its prominent historical figures.

Describes the genealogical origins of the Hou family and lists the descendants of the family now settled in Taipei, Taiwan.

Traces the genealogical origins of the Lin family and lists the names of its descendants who are members of the Genealogical Society of the Lin Family in Manila, the Philippines.

A clan history of the Yang family living in Hsi-hu, Chang-hua hsien, Taiwan.
This eight-volume set is divided into two major parts. The first part is a comprehensive directory of Chinese names. The second part records the directory of names compiled from the following nine historical works: Chiu T'ang shu, Hsin T'ang shu, Chiu Wu tai shih, Hsin Wu tai shih, Sung shih, Liao shih, Chin shih, Yuan, and Ming shih. For scholarly use.

The development of clans in the New Territories of Hong Kong. The following families are described in this book: Tang, Man, Liu, Hau, Pang, Tao, Chan, and Chang in Tsuen Wan and the Tsangs in Shatin.

This book describes genealogical history and its development in Hong Kong. It lists the recent acquisition of genealogical resources from the New Territories arranged by the names of family and village, charts the entry of the Hakka clans into the Hong Kong area in the Ming and Ch'ing periods, and indicates the major holdings of local genealogies in Hong Kong libraries and institutions. Useful for researchers on the genealogical study of Hong Kong.

Research on Chinese surnames. The book contains three major parts: (1) research on surnames in ancient China including the origin, historical background, and naming patterns of the names of Chinese emperors; (2) the social significance of the variation of Chinese names including generation names, occupation names, religious names, and assumed names as well as the relationship of these names with Chinese calendars and Chinese ink; and (3) a discussion on how to avoid choosing bad names; provided with examples, use of pen names in the literary field, and the reasons for nameless persons in ancient China.

This four-volume set traces the genealogical origins of the Hsieh family from the reign of Ming Shen-tsung, 1573-1620, to the present time in Taipei, Taiwan.
A statistical analysis of Chinese names. The book contains a statistical listing of Chinese surnames arranged by the following provinces or areas in China: Pei-ching, Shang-hai, Shan-hsi, Liao-ning, Ssu-ch’uan, Kuang-tung, and Fu-chien. For general and scholarly use on census population statistics and surname distribution and naming in China.


“Where does your name come from?” is the meaning of the title. This book contains three major parts: (1) discussions of the creation, formation, and development of Chinese names, the relationship of names to the Chinese feudal system, and the names’ origins and meanings; (2) the root of Chinese surnames, introducing the most commonly used 1,048 surnames in China; and (3) broad descriptions of ancient and modern Chinese surnames arranged by Hanyu pinyin. Five thousand ninety-three common and uncommon names are introduced in this third part. A comprehensive reference tool for researchers as well as general readers.


Traces the genealogical history of the Lin family living in Lung-ching, Taiwan.


Index of Chinese anonyms and pseudonyms. For general use.


A directory of pseudonyms of modern Chinese literary authors. All the Chinese authors who published between 1917 and 1949 are included in this directory. There are three parts to this volume. Part one contains a list of personal names with indexes to their pseudonyms, pen names, ts’u, or hao. Part two is an index of pseudonyms. Part three is an index in Hanyu pinyin of personal names. For reference on modern Chinese literary authors and their works.


A comprehensive genealogical history of the Hsu family. It traces the family’s origins from the Hsia dynasty during the reign of the Great Yü and describes the prominent figures in Chinese history from the Shang to the Ch’ing dynasties. The book also covers the modern generations of the contemporary Chinese era as well as giving a list of their descendants living in Taiwan.

Hsu shih tsung ch’in hui hui k’an 徐氏宗親會會刊. T’ai-pei: Hsu shih tsung ch’in hui, 1982-

A magazine of the Genealogical Society of the Hsu Family. Each volume includes the family’s genealogy, branches, descendants, activities, and reports of meetings of the Society.
Hsu, Wei-min 徐為民. *Chung-kuo chin hsien tai jen wu pieh ming tz'u tien* 中國今現代人物別名辭典. Shen-yang: Shen-yang ch'u pan she, 1993.

A comprehensive dictionary of Chinese names. The volume covers all notable contemporary Chinese who were born from 1840 to the present. An index of more than 40,000 assumed names, including nicknames, pen names, house names, religious names, and other forms of names as well as a collection of 14,000 names of the persons who adopted those names, are covered in this dictionary. For general and scholarly use.

*Hsun-hai Shih shih ta tsung p'u* 潛海施氏大宗譜. T'ai-pei: Lung wen ch'u pan she, 1993.

Shih Lang 施琅 was a minister in the navy of Fu-chien province in the Ch'ing dynasty. This book traces the genealogical origins of his family and includes a complete list of his descendants.


Traces the genealogical origins of the Hu family and its development to the present time and lists the descendants of the family now settled in Taiwan.


This book is a genealogical register of the Hu family. It includes genealogical charts of the family from the first to the twenty-first generation and a description of the family’s ancestors including their personal names and birth and death dates.

*Huan ch'iü Kuo shih tsung p'u* 環球郭氏宗譜. T'ai-pei: Kuo shih tsung ch'in hsiu p'u wei yuan hui, 1981.

This volume contains four chapters. Chapter one describes the prominent historical figures of the family. Chapter two traces the genealogical origins of the family. Chapter three details the family’s genealogical registers as documented in Chinese history. Chapter four includes a description of various branches of the Kuo family settled in Fu-chien, Kuang-tung, and Taiwan provinces.


An analysis of Chinese names explaining the significance of the number of strokes, meaning, sound, and shapes of the characters used for naming. This book is a typical guide to fortunetelling by names. For general use.


Traces from the first to the twenty-first generations of the Hung family. Each entry includes a brief description of the descendant’s name and his birth and/or death dates.


Arranged chronologically, the book identifies and describes the contributions of the Hsu family’s descendants to Chinese history. For general use.

I, Pen-lang 易本狼, d. 1863 or 1864. Hsing hsi k’an wu: fu cha chi 姓觧刊誤：附箋記.

Supplement of printing corrections for the book entitled Hsing hsi: fu lu, cha chi listed above under the author, Ch’en Shih-yuan.


Records the history of the Chang family that originated in I-lan, Taiwan. The set covers several subject areas, including the origin and genealogical lineage of the Chang family, biographies, lists of descendants who have made significant contributions to Chinese society, clan policy and rules of order, honors awarded to family members, and a documentary history of collections relating to or written by Chang family members.


Includes the clan history and genealogy of the Chou family living in Taiwan.


Traces the origin of the Lan family and lists the members of its family who belong to the Lan shih Genealogical Society.


A clan history of the Yao family living in Jui-an, Taiwan.


The “Names of a hundred families” in the Ch’ing dynasty version. The book contains a list of 480 surnames written in Chinese. These names were selected as the most commonly used names in the Ch’ing dynasty. No explanation is provided for the derivation and use of these surnames. For general use.

Kao, Chih-pin 高志彬. Lung-yü Chang shih tsu p’u 龍嵐張氏族譜. 8 vols. T’ai-pei: Lung wen ch’u pan she, 19--.
A genealogical history of the Chang family living in Lung-yü, Taiwan. The family moved from Fu-chien, China at the end of the Yuan dynasty.


This volume comprises three major parts: (1) forty-eight genealogical charts (the list starts with Genghis Khan and end in the Ch'ing dynasty, covering a period of 1,200 years), (2) endnotes of important historical figures and events as well as a supplement of genealogical significance to part one, and (3) a name index.


Traces the origins of the K'o family and includes the names of the descendants who came from Hui-an hsien, Fu-chien province.


Includes the genealogical history of the Ku family and lists the names of the descendants living in Taiwan.


This book compiles the documents preserved in the K'ung family's archives of the Society for the Cultural Preservation of Ch'ü-fu, Shan-tung province. The archival materials have been preserved for more than 300 years. It reflects the family's development in politics, economics, culture, and history.

*Kuo hsueh wen hsien kuan hsien ts'ang Chung-kuo tsu p'u hsu lieh hsuan k'an* 國學文獻館現藏中國族譜序列選刊. T'ai-pei: Kuo hsueh wen hsien kuan, 1983.

The work is made up of the genealogical series that traces the following surnames: Ch'en 陳, Lin 林, Huang 黃, Wang 王, Chang 張, Li 李, Wu 吳, Liu 劉, Ts'ai 蔡, and Yang 楊. These commonly used names comprise over half of the population in Taiwan. For general use.


Includes the genealogical history and names of the descendants of the Kuo family living in Taiwan.


Two albums of photographs to complement the genealogical history book written by Johanna Menzel Meskill entitled *A Chinese pioneer family: the Lins of Wu-feng, Taiwan, 1729-1895*. The first album contains 155 pictures showing the political, economic, educational, and public activities of the Lins who played very prominent roles in the modern history of Taiwan. The second album consists of 351 photographs showing the Lins' home and social life during the first decade of this century.
Traces the genealogical origins of the Lai family and includes the names of the descendants living in Taiwan.

Traces the genealogical ancestry of the Li family.

Contains the genealogical history of Manchu clans. The book covers the commonly used single surnames such as Chang 張, Kao 高, Pai 白, Na 那, Kuan 関, Wang 王, Chao 趙, and Wu 吳 as well as a large number of compound surnames.

Traces the origins of the Li family and lists the names of its descendants living in Taiwan.

Li tai jen wu pieh shu chü ch’u ming t’ung chien 歷代人物署居處名通檢. T’ai-pei: Shih chieh shu chü, 1962.
Index to “house names” of the prominent figures in Chinese history. The book focuses mainly on people from the Sung, Yuan, Ming, and Ch’ing dynasties. For reference use.

Li tai t’ung hsing ming lu yin te 歷代同姓名錄引得. T’ai-pei: Ch’eng wen Publishing Co., 1966. (Photocopy of Peiping: Harvard-Yenching Institute, 1931. (Index no. 4.))
The Li tai t’ung hsing ming lu was written by Liu Ch’ang-hua 劉長華 and completed in 1871. It is in twenty-two chüan with a one chüan supplement. It is considered to be one of the most comprehensive works in the field of Chinese surname research. For scholarly use.

Traces the origins of the most commonly used one hundred Chinese surnames in Taiwan.

Traces the genealogical history of the Liao family and lists the names of its descendants living in Taiwan.

Traces the genealogy of the Lin family and lists the names of its descendants living in Taiwan.

Includes the genealogical history of the Liu family and lists the names of its descendants in Taiwan.


Includes the genealogical history of the Ho family from Lu-chiang, An-hui province.


Dictionary of nicknames. The book covers nicknames of persons from the First Emperor of the Ch’in dynasty to the Nan-pei Ch’ao period. For scholarly use.


Includes the genealogical origins of the Lu family and lists the names of its descendants in Taiwan.


Traces the genealogical history of the Chi family living in Taiwan and includes a directory of the Chi’s descendants with their photographs.


The ancestry of Chinese surnames. This book introduces the origins of 144 commonly used surnames. Each surname contains a description of its origin, records the time when the name was used during different dynasties, and describes the prominent figures in Chinese history who have the same surname. The appendix contains an interesting collection of names with contradictory meanings, a list of rarely used surnames, various types of names with their most significant meaning, such as place, country, occupation, official position, and community group, etc., and a collection of the most widely used compound names. For general use.


A comprehensive biographical dictionary of statesmen in the Manchu Ch’ing dynasty giving their titles of honor and nobility. For scholarly research on historical and biographical studies on the prominent figures in the Manchu dynasty.


An index of over 9,000 pen names and pseudonyms of 2,000 contemporary Chinese literary authors. For general reference.
A dictionary of clan names. Contains surnames from Pai chia hsing, the derivation of these surnames, an index in stroke order, and a general history of Chinese names. It is a comprehensive reference tool for both upper-division students and scholars.

Introduces Chinese names which originated from place names. Arranged by Hanyu pinyin, 477 names are included in this book. For general readers.

The principles and design of name giving. The book includes the following subjects: humorous stories associated with analogous names, name structure, the importance of naming in Chinese history, the typical classification or types of names, notes on how to choose an auspicious name, the importance of strokes associated with naming, and fortunetelling by names. For general use.

Compiled in the Ch'ing dynasty, this book contains multilaneage genealogies of the Manchu clans of the Eight Banners. The volume covers 1,114 surnames from A.D. 1735 to 1744. It traces military Manchu clans that belong to the Eight Banners but excludes members of the royal family, Ai-hsin Chueh-lo.

Analysis of the origins of the Taiwanese people and the distribution of surnames in Taiwan. There are two parts to this book. The first part introduces the most popular and the least popular names used in Taiwan and the second part includes the origin and distribution of the most popularly used names in Taiwanese counties and cities. For research in genealogical history and statistical analysis of surnames in Taiwan as well as study of Chinese local history and anthropology.

Traces the origins of the Liu family and includes a list of its descendants in Taiwan.

Research analysis on Taiwanese surnames. The book covers the most commonly used surnames in Taiwan. Each entry gives the origin and historical background of the name and the census population and distribution of the name in Taiwan. For general reference.
Taiwan pai chia hsing k’ao 臺灣百家姓考. T’ai-pei: Li ming wen hua shih yeh kung ssu, 1988.

Analysis of the most commonly used one hundred Chinese surnames in Taiwan. For general use.


According to the references in this book, the descendants of the Chung family living in Taiwan came primarily from Chiang-hsi, Fu-chien, and Kuang-tung provinces. This volume covers the genealogy of the Chung family from P’ing-hsiang hsien Nan-hsi hsiang Ch’i-pao village in Chiang-hsi.


Traces the origins, branches, and descendants of the Huang family in Taiwan and includes genealogical charts.


An explanation of surnames. This book of surnames carries descriptions of the names’ origins and of historical persons who adopted these names. For general use.


Traces the genealogical history of the Chao family. Chao is the first surname listed in the book, Pai chia hsing. For general use.


Introductory explanation of how to compile your own genealogy. For general use.

Shih chieh Li shih tsung ch’in lien ho tsung hui hui k’an 世界李氏宗親聯合會會刊. T’ai-pei: Shih chieh Li shih tsung ch’in tsung hui, 1972-1975.

A directory of the descendants of the Li family who belong to the World-wide Li Family Joint Clansmen General Association.


Ou-yang, Ou, Ou, and Yang are four names of the same genealogical origin. This book includes the description of the names’ origins as well as chronological lists of the genealogical significance of its descendants from ancient times to the contemporary era.

The origins of Chinese names. Four-hundred forty-nine Chinese surnames are introduced in this volume. The book is arranged in the same order as that of the book, Pai chia hsing. An index of the names in character stroke order is provided for easy reference to these names. For general use.


Shih-shan Feng-p’o was located in the south of Fu-chien province. This branch of the Liang family immigrated to Fu-chien at the end of the Yuan dynasty. The book covers the genealogical history of the family as well as charts of its descendants.


Indexes of Chinese pseudonyms and personal names of modern authors. For general reference.

Shun i Yao shih pai shih yuan liu k’ao 舜裔姚氏百世源流考. T’ai-pe: Yao shih tsung ch’iin hui, 1981.

Traces the genealogical history of the Yao family from its founder, the Emperor Shun, to its one-hundredth generation.


The study of Chinese family pedigrees. The book explains the factors which affect the choice of Chinese personal names and shows how the decision should be made in order to pick the best possible name for yourself and your children. The various factors which affect the choice of a name include: Chinese yin and yang (female and male), wu hsing (five forces), shih-erh sheng hsiao (the twelve animal symbols), and character stroke order. These name choices, being associated with their meanings of good luck or of evil spirits, play important roles in the Chinese naming tradition. For general readers.


Genealogical register of the descendants of the Hsu family who settled in Taiwan from the twelfth to the twentieth generations.


Traces the genealogy of the Che family. The book includes a directory of the family’s descendants and contains the historical findings of genealogical documents and tombstones in China.

An annotated bibliography of Chinese clan and lineage genealogies and other genealogical works from the post-T'ang era. Over 4,300 genealogical titles are now located in the Chinese collection of the Genealogical Society of Utah. It is a unique resource center in the United States for genealogical research on Chinese family names and history.


A dictionary of Chinese names. The book contains a collection of 5,662 names which includes 3,484 single, 2,032 double, and 146 triple-character names. For general reference.


The surname Chang is one of the most popular surnames in both China and Taiwan. According to *The distribution of family names in Taiwan* over 7.1 percent of the population in Taiwan and more than 10 percent of the people in China today have adopted the surname Chang.


An analysis of both ancient and modern Chinese names. The book traces the history and origin of Chinese names. Entries are arranged by stroke order. For scholarly use.


The reflection of Chinese culture on names. The volume discusses the historical development of names and the status and importance of names in Chinese culture, religion, and society.


The art of giving a Chinese name. There are three parts in this book: (1) the psychological, cultural, and philosophical representation of Chinese names, (2) analysis from ancient times to the present of the Chinese naming patterns and their relationship to the surrounding cultural environment and to contemporary society, and (3) introduction to the various types of Chinese names including *tzu*, *hao*, house name, pen name, flower name, religious name, posthumous name, and other pseudonyms.


Various views on Chinese names. This book includes the following chapters: (1) *hsing* and *shih*: details on the historical background of Chinese names; (2) the question of naming: points out several factors which affect the choice of a Chinese name, such as: the naming pattern of ancient people, place, local custom, nickname, generation name, and mythology; (3) discusses other assumed names, *tzu*, *hao*, and others; (4) "year name" or *nien hao* of a dead emperor; (5) names of minorities, religious names, and names affected by local culture; (6) a miscellaneous
chapter containing a comparison between the naming pattern of eastern versus western names, names associated with poems, riddles, places, and luck. The list of names in Pai chia hsing in Hanyu pinyin and English pronunciation is included in the appendix. For both general and scholarly use.

—. Hua-hsia hsing shih chih mi 華夏姓氏之謎. T'ai-pei: Chih shu fang ch'u pan she, 1992.

Traces the mystery of Chinese surnames from ancient times to the contemporary era. There are seven chapters in this book: (1) from totem to Chinese names; (2) the ancestral system in the Western Chou dynasty and the difference between two types of early Chinese names, hsing and shih; (3) the noble system in the Wei and Chin dynasties and the use of social names during that period; (4) the Chinese melting pot: the combination of names used by the minorities in China; (5) changing society as reflected in the change in surnames; (6) the awareness of tracing one's family roots and ancestors; and (7) the Chinese cultural tradition and genealogical studies. For general use.


A dictionary of Chinese surnames arranged by Hanyu pinyin. For general reference.


Biographical histories of the Liao, Chin, and Yuan dynasties. This four-volume set is a compilation of three representative works from the above mentioned dynasties: Liao shih, Chin shih, and Yuan shih. For scholarly use.


An analysis of Tibetan names. The book traces the origins of Tibetan names and provides a list of 543 Chinese names adopted by the Tibetan people with transliterations in Chinese characters and in Hanyu pinyin. For reference on tracing the origins of Tibetan names.


Traces the genealogical origins of the Wang family and lists the names of its descendants in Singapore.


An index of anonyms and pseudonyms of Chinese names from the Ch'ing dynasty. Based on biographies published in the Ch'ing period, the author consulted more than thirty-two historical documents and books, plus numerous clan histories and other genealogical resources. The book is arranged by character stroke order with a personal name index arranged by Wade-Giles.
romanization for easy access. An excellent resource for scholars doing extensive research on biographies in the Ch’ing dynasty.


Traces the most frequently used sixty surnames and provides a directory of genealogical societies in Taiwan. For general use.


Traces the history and genealogy of the Wu family and includes a list of the descendants in Taiwan.


A survey of surnames and genealogical societies in Taiwan. According to the author, the recorded number of 1,694 surnames are used in Taiwan. This book traces the early Taiwanese immigrants from China, analyzes the distribution of Taiwanese surnames, and describes the historical background of the most frequently used one hundred surnames. A directory of genealogical societies in Taiwan is provided in the appendix. For general use.


A genealogical history of the Yang family in Taiwan.


Traces the history and genealogy of the Yang family and includes a list of its descendants in Taiwan.


An index of pseudonyms used in the Ch’ing dynasty. In ancient China, it was considered impolite to call out or address someone by name directly, especially if the person was senior to the caller in generational rank. Rather, the hao or nickname would be adopted to serve the purpose. The utilization of shih ming, “house name,” and other pseudonyms prospered in the Ming dynasty and it was widely used during the Ch’ing dynasty. This index covers all the prominent figures who were famous or important in politics, economics, science, medicine, literature, and music in the Ch’ing dynasty. More than 36,000 persons and as many as 103,000 hao or pseudonyms are covered in this volume. For reference and research use.
Yeh shih chia p’u 叶氏家谱. Chi-lung: Ch’eng kung ch’u pan she, 1965.
A genealogical history of the Yeh family in Taiwan.

A clan history and genealogy of the Yeh family in Taiwan.

Traces the genealogical history of the Yeh family in Taiwan.

Names connected to Chinese social customs. The book contains three parts: (1) an introduction to popular surnames and their origins, (2) research on rare names, and (3) biographical descriptions of the famous and important persons in the Northern Wei dynasty. For general use.

A comprehensive index of surnames of Chinese literary authors in the Yuan dynasty. For reference and research use.

A pseudonym index to more than 550 modern Chinese authors arranged by character stroke order of their personal names. This volume is used as a dictionary on contemporary Chinese authors. For reference use.

English Language Publications

Western names always start with the given name and end with the surname. In Asian countries, the components of a person’s name may be chosen and put together in very different ways. This article analyzes the basic structure and usage of Asian names including Chinese, Indian, and Arabic names.

This article discusses Chinese characters and dialects, the romanization systems commonly used for transliteration of Chinese names, and the decision-making on recording Chinese proper
names. A practical guide for general readers and professionals who are experiencing difficulties in identifying individuals with Chinese names.


Introduces the different names that a Chinese has, including the milk name 乳名, book name 書名, hao 號, official name 官名, posthumous name 謚名, flowery name 花名, clan or hall name 堂名, and house name 室名, and describes the various of names that a Chinese emperor has used. For general use.


In Hong Kong, tens of thousands of young Chinese take English names each year. The practice took root about fifteen to twenty years ago. It began as a way of identifying with the ruling class, or being identified by it. Now it has become a custom with the people used to facilitate communicating with westerners. For general use.

Berlitz, Charles F. “Hwang it all—which Wong are you?” Horizon XIV, no. 3 (June 1972): 120.

Describes the phonetic difference between Chinese ideographic names that sound the same but can be written differently and have different meanings. The article includes examples of how American names such as Reagan, Nixon, and Kennedy can be translated into Chinese. For general use.


This paper includes the analysis of surnames, generation names, given names, and the description of other names used by the Chinese people including courtesy names, assumed names, childhood names, and epithet names. The authors compare the similarities and differences between English and Chinese surnames, trace the origin of the most commonly used Chinese surnames, provide the meanings of generation names with examples, and analyze the semantic fields represented by most given names. An excellent article on the basics of Chinese personal names.


Suggests a uniform method of writing Chinese names in order to avoid the ambiguity and mistakes made in cataloging and processing of modern Chinese personal names.

Chait, Ralph Milton. A chronological arrangement of the names of all the Chinese emperors and the dates of their reign together with lists of Chinese seal, character and symbolic marks. New York: Privately printed, 1928.

This book was compiled by a Chinese art dealer who found the necessity of obtaining the precise information concerning the date and reign of an early emperor in order to process the many voluminous works written on China and its arts. A handy reference for students and collectors of Chinese art work. For general use.

With nearly 800 pages, this volume contains lists of romanized Chinese and Japanese surnames, surnames in character stroke order, and Library of Congress classification schedules applied to the vernacular collections. For American and European librarians with limited capability in the Chinese and Japanese languages.


Describes the author's research on the Qin clan of Wuxi. He journeyed during the past fifteen years throughout China, Hong Kong, and Taiwan. There were thirty-three generations from Qin Quan, a prominent poet of the Sung dynasty, going back in time 900 years. The book is divided into twenty-eight chapters, each one introducing one male member of the Qin family. Genealogical diagrams of the Qin clan and its descendants are also included. For general readers as well as scholars in Asian history, genealogy, and archaeological studies.


The characteristics of lineages, including social structure, symbolism, and arrangement of ritual in Yangmansa, a village of about 3,500 people and 650 families located in Xincheng county, Hebei province, are analyzed in this article. Pages 515-19 reproduce the ancestral tablets and ancestral scrolls furnished by Yangmansa villagers in providing evidence of the fixed genealogical mode of kinship presented in ritual and in social representation. For scholars interested in modern anthropological research of Chinese patrilineal kinship.


This dictionary provides an easy reference to the names and terms relating to Chinese civilization, historical events, and personalities. Entries range from prehistory to the end of 1977. They cover the classical pre-imperial period, the whole of the empire from 221 B.C. until its collapse in 1911, the Republic, and the first twenty-eight years of the People's Republic. Important personalities, dynasties and events, historical trends, social and economic history, and technology are included in this volume. For general readers, historians, genealogists, and scholars.


Detailing Professor Betty Lee Sung's four-year project of sifting, reviewing, indexing, and computer data entry of 581 boxes of Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) documents at the New York Archives of Chinese people who came to the United States. Information includes pictures, letters, and extensive family histories of early Chinese immigrants who arrived in this country between 1882 and 1946. For general readers and scholars interested in researching Chinese immigration history.


Lists the Chinese family names in Wade-Giles romanization with their Chinese equivalents followed by the McCune-Reischauer romanization. For reference use.

Contains a collection of 2,579 biographical descriptions of Chinese statesmen, generals, writers, poets, and others. For general and academic audiences who are interested in the language, literature, and politics of premodern China.


Discusses the basic structure of Chinese names in the context of “standard Chinese” (Mandarin) and analyzes the variant forms of the names of ethnic Chinese from Malaysia, Singapore, and Hong Kong. For librarians and publishers who do not know Chinese but need to deal with the problem of identifying the variant forms of Chinese personal names appearing in English-language publications.


Includes the description of Betty Lee Sung’s IMS project, involving the organization of thousands of the early Chinese immigration documents within the period 1882 to 1946, for entry into a computer database known as “Chinese Immigration Records.” For general readers and scholars researching Chinese immigration history.


Analyzes two prominent leaders in the nomadic conquest of Western Chin. The article examines how Liu Yuan (ca. 250-310) linked the genealogical traditions associated with his surname to both the royal Han dynasty and Hsiung-nu lines and reviews the reasons that induced Shih Le (ca. 280-332) to adopt both his surname of “Stone” and personal name of “Inscription” to take advantage of contemporary prophetic lore. For scholars tracing the history of the nomadic usage of Chinese surnames.


This chapter provides a brief overview of Chinese immigration history, discusses the origins of Chinese surnames, and explains the meaning of some common and representative Chinese names as usually spelled in America. For general readers.


This paper provides the following details: the distinction between Chinese last and first names, the derivation of Chinese names, the introduction of singular and compound names, different forms of Chinese names, and suggestions for the Anglo-American cataloging rules, 2nd edition, on the cataloging of Chinese names. Lists Chinese popular names in *pinyin* and Wade-Giles romanizations. Hong Kong, Malaysia, and Singapore systems are included in appendices. For American librarians to distinguish and catalog Chinese personal names and for scholars interested in researching the subject of Chinese names.

This book is based on a compilation of notes collected by the author. It discusses and analyzes the variant forms and sources of Chinese surnames and personal names commonly used by the Chinese in Malaysia and Singapore. A comprehensive handbook for both general readers and specialists in Chinese names.


In a study which examines the correlation between name change and social behavior of a group of Chinese students at the University of Minnesota in 1967, it was discovered that name changers showed better socialization, economic adjustment, and social control than nonchangers. For use in social and psychological studies on Chinese names and the changing patterns of these names.


Studies a group of Chinese students at the University of Minnesota concerning the phenomenon of name changes. Among the students being surveyed, those who anglicized their first names showed better socialization, economic adjustment, and social control than those who did not. For use in social and psychological reviews of Chinese names changes, particularly in adopting western names.


Presents a comprehensive analysis of the Chinese family system, including its origin, evolution in matrimonial custom, large family and polygamy, paternal power and filial piety, legacy and inheritance, clan organization, constitution of clan government and its functions, the ancestral hall, clan history, and the system of personal names. For upper division undergraduates and scholars in Asian studies.

—. "Genealogy and family name origins of the Chinese." In *On Chinese studies*, 126-44.

This article was written for the International Congress of Genealogy, San Francisco, in 1915. It traces the development of Chinese surnames, including single and compound names, from the Emperor Fu-hsi to the present, and describes the influence of foreign inhabitants on Chinese surnames and the derivation of these names from eighteen different sources. Other subjects include the system of family associations; the so-called *t’u t’ang* 祠堂 “Hall for worship of ancestors” where the individual family’s genealogical record is preserved, the family name poem which is composed of twenty unique characters in which all characters must be balanced in class and different in toneto represent the middle names, or generation names, of the twenty generations of the family; and the hereditary titles originating in the ancient feudal system. For researchers in Asian history, genealogy, and anthropological studies.


Chinese surnames were used to measure the frequency of in marriages and out marriages, as was also the surnames of Koreans and Japanese in Los Angeles and Hawaii. In Los Angeles, the Japanese rate of out marriages was the highest, followed by the Chinese. The second position was also taken by the Chinese in Hawaii.

Contains a questionnaire survey using Chinese names to formulate the Chinese forms of address as part of the cross cultural research on invariant norms of address.


Introduces the nature of Chinese characters, discusses the complications of cataloging and retrieval of Chinese names and titles, and proposes solutions to improve access to Chinese-language materials. The article analyzes Chinese surnames by distinguishing between the last and the first name, the choice between different names used by the same author, and the use of variant romanization schemes to transliterate the author's name and title. Excellent resource for librarians, publishers, and researchers.


Includes over 1,200 annotated entries of forty-eight subject categories ranging from art and psychology to zoology with cultural, ethnic, and geographical variations. Books and articles on the subject of Chinese names are covered in this bibliography. For general and academic audiences and for reference.


Discusses the character names in Maxine Hong Kingston's work of fiction. Of the six main female characters in the book, two are referred to by their full names, two are addressed by their first names, and another two are not given proper names. The analysis of the Chinese naming system as it applies to the character names in the book and the connection of these names with the identity, gender, and person in Chinese society are reviewed. For scholars and writers interested in literary and social analyses of Chinese names.


Using actual examples, the author demonstrates the difficulties of identifying Chinese names containing a non-Chinese given name and suggests various entry elements for these names based on his analysis of the *Anglo-American cataloging rules*, 1st and 2nd editions, concerning Chinese names.


The origin of Chinese surnames, Chinese surnames in *Hanyu pinyin*, commonly used Chinese given names, and English personal names with Chinese equivalents are discussed in this book. A perfect guide to assist parents in naming their children and to assist westerners in choosing a Chinese name.

Includes chapters on the origin of Chinese surnames, the surnames list in *Hanyu pinyin*, commonly used Chinese given names, and its relation to the animal sign, and the Chinese equivalents of commonly used English personal names. The book contains over 900 examples of personal names in simplified characters and *Hanyu pinyin* and is arranged alphabetically to help Chinese parents make the perfect choice in naming their children and to assist westerners in choosing a Chinese name knowing its meaning.


Contains an introduction and a sample list of Chinese literary scholars, including their literary names or *tzu* and fancy names or *hao* given by the authors themselves or by others. For general use on names of Chinese literary authors.


Contains comments on Chinese name styles and the usage of this practice. For general use.


Guides the reader in choosing an appropriate and auspicious Chinese name through the analysis of *yin-yang*, the five elements, the total number of strokes in the full name, the Chinese horoscope, and the eight characters (referring to a person's year, month, day, and hour of birth). This volume is the first book written in English on the subject of analyzing Chinese names. For general readers of all levels as well as scholars interested in researching Chinese names.


Contains chiefly biographical information on the ancient Chinese scholars, emperors, military officials, and literary authors. Arranged alphabetically, this part of the work collects a total number of 974 Chinese proper names. For general reference.


The book takes the Lin family as the framework for social research on Taiwanese local history. It describes not only the individuals of the Lin family but also locates them in Taiwan during the centuries of its rapid sinicization, especially from 1683 to 1895. The book is divided into three parts: (1) pioneers on a Chinese frontier, (2) the Lins and the crisis of the Chinese state, and (3) the making of a Taiwanese gentry family. It also contains maps and figures. For general readers as well as scholars of social and genealogical research on Taiwanese local history.


Identifies the original names behind the pseudonyms, stage names, nicknames, and other types of assumed names selected by individuals throughout the world. The dictionary contains more than 55,000 original names and 80,000 assumed names of authors, entertainers, athletes, politicians,
criminals, military leaders, monarchs, and business executives, among others. Examples of prominent Chinese historical figures such as Confucius are covered. For reference use.


This pamphlet discusses the adoption of the Chinese pinyin system by the State Council of the People’s Republic of China on 1 January 1979 to be used for the romanization of PRC names and places and includes Wade-Giles to pinyin conversion charts, a list of major PRC political and military leaders' names, Chinese place names, and a PRC map in pinyin. For both general and scholarly use. Recommended for librarians, publishers, and book indexers who handle the transliterations or conversion of Chinese names from Wade-Giles to pinyin or vice versa.


Reports the findings in Chinese surname research by Du Ruofu and Yuan Yida at the Institute of Genetics of the Chinese Academy of Sciences. Based on the census statistical data collected in China and Taiwan, they found 1,066 surnames among the Han people. Further research will be achieved through the analysis of the blood relationship among the people carrying these names and their rate of migration in different regions. For general readers and scholars interested in researching Chinese surnames.


Describes the attachment of Chinese surnames to the designation of villages, family settlements, or temples. Examples of using surnames in village nomenclature are given. Of a general and interesting nature.

—. “Village boys and men.” In Village life in China, 179-95.

Describes the status of males in the traditional Chinese village and introduces the names given to Chinese children.

Smith, Elsdon C. “Names in other countries: China.” In The story of our names (Detroit, MI: Gale Research Company, 1970), [124]-29.

Describes the history of Chinese surnames, the variant forms of names, and the common usage of these names. For general use.


This volume contains over 3,400 references on names with complete citations, location of the work, and comments (rated good, fair, or poor) on books, articles, and book chapters. It covers all areas of names and naming from animals and the Bible to nicknames and psychology. Forty-five entries are listed under the subject of Chinese names for works published between 1920 and 1950. The New York Public Library is the major location of the works listed in this bibliography. For reference in public and academic libraries.

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Smith, Frederick Porter. *A vocabulary of proper names in Chinese and English of places, persons, tribes, and sects, in China, Japan, Korea, Annam, Siam, Burmah, the Straits and adjacent countries*. Shanghai: Presbyterian Mission Press, 1870.

Arranged alphabetically according to Mandarin pronunciation, this bilingual Chinese and English list contains matters of historical, classical, geographical, and commercial interest of proper names of persons, places, dynasties, tribes, and sects. Suitable for general readers, writers, and translators who have an interest in and a relation to Asians. For reference use.


Describes Betty Lee Sung’s research project at the New York Regional Archives. It involves the investigation of nearly 600 boxes of INS documents for early Chinese immigrants who came to the United States between 1882 and 1946. These records are entered into a database and can be made available to the general public and to scholars interested in researching Chinese immigration history.


Includes a brief history of Chinese names and provides the format and practice of Chinese personal names in English. Suggestions are made to improve the standardization of these names in conformity with library cataloging rules. For general readers and library catalogers.


Lists variant spellings of Chinese surnames as found in official documents by the compiler over the past ten years. It includes variant forms of the name in Wade-Giles transliteration and the possible country of origin as supported in the original source.


Personal naming marks an important social transition in Chinese society for both men and women. The distinctive feature of Chinese personal names is analyzed using the case study of ethnographic evidence gathered in the village of Ha Tsuen, a single-lineage village located in the northwest corner of Hong Kong New Territories. For academic audiences.