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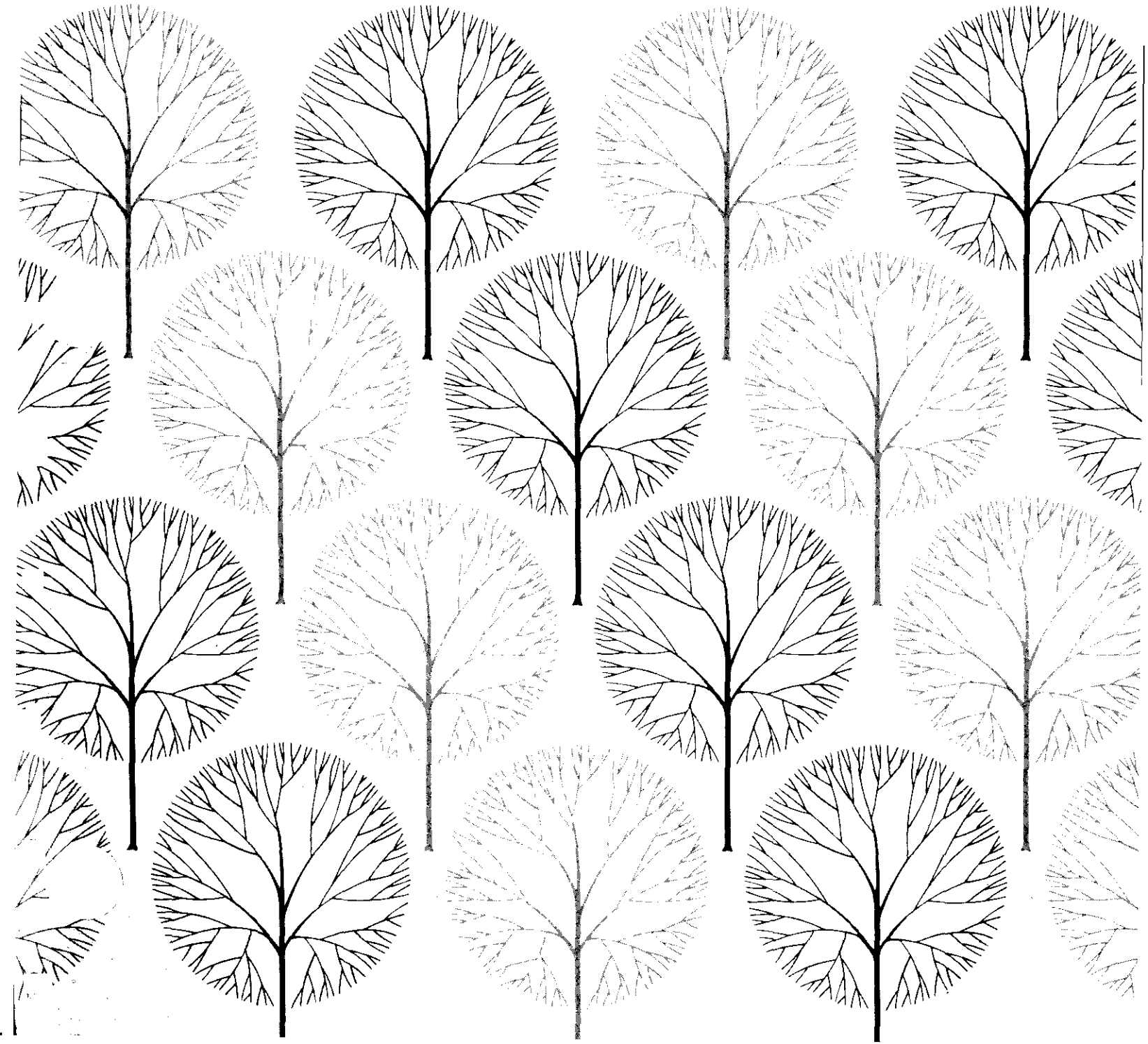
**MICROFORMS - LEVEL 4**

Major Genealogical  
Record Sources in

# Taiwan

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The Genealogical Department of  
The Church of Jesus Christ  
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# Preface

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This paper is not intended to detail the various historical records of Taiwan, but to supply, as accurately as possible, a general overview of the major genealogical records of Taiwan and guide of useful source materials to meet the needs of all educational levels.

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and Arthur P. Wolf, Stanford University, in the compilation of this paper. Their suggestions and knowledge of source materials in Taiwan have proven invaluable. These scholars are in no way responsible for errors that may be found in this paper. Such errors should be brought to the attention of the Priesthood Genealogy Division of the Genealogical Department.

# Historical Summary

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Specialists in Chinese history generally consider Taiwan to have been a frontier or fringe area of the Chinese Mainland; the island was largely undeveloped until the nineteenth century. Due to its small size and brief recorded history, Taiwan is mentioned in only a few scattered references prior to the seventeenth century. The Chinese themselves knew little about Taiwan before the eighth century.

With the gradual shift southward of Chinese commercial and population centers, however, crossings from mainland China to Taiwan became more frequent. By the thirteenth century small settlements were being made along the western coastal plain of Taiwan and in the smaller, nearby Penghu Islands. Nonetheless, the islands were occupied by relatively few settlers from China when compared to the non-Chinese aborigines, who even today generally occupy the island's mountainous regions. These native tribes, incidentally, have no written records, but many have kept oral genealogies for centuries.

The Chinese Ming Government (A.D. 1368-1644) neglected Taiwan due to its preoccupation with continued crises along the mainland's northern frontier. As a result, various lawless elements from Japan and China used Taiwan as a base, both for trade and pirate activities. In order to protect themselves from banditry, the settlers already in Taiwan, who were generally engaged in fishing, trading with the natives and seasonal farming, clustered in the Tainan, Lukang, and Tanshui areas.

The first large migrations of Chinese began in the 1620's at a time when southern China was suffering from famine and Taiwan was being taken over by the Dutch. The Dutch registered and taxed the native and Chinese populations for several decades, but only fragments of the Dutch records remain today.

After 1644 a wave of refugees from the Ming-Ch'ing wars came to Taiwan. This was followed by another surge in the 1650's, when Cheng Ch'eng-kung established himself along the Fukien coast and the Manchu government increased its efforts to drive him out. Cheng Ch'eng-kung expelled the Dutch from Taiwan in 1661 and established a Ming loyalist regime on the island. Migrations from Fukien and Kwangtung provinces increased in spite of Ch'ing regulations forbidding any kind of movement between Taiwan and the coastal provinces of the mainland.

Ch'ing rule was established in Taiwan in 1683, and more waves of migrants followed as restrictions were relaxed. The Ch'ing conquest of Taiwan also

marked the introduction and gradual expansion of the traditional Chinese administrative system, but only fragments of these records exist. A few Ch'ing dynasty land records in the form of deeds and bills of sale can be found today in some museums and collections.

During the eighteenth century, there were many transient farmers, usually single males, who stayed in Taiwan for the growing season and then returned to their homes on the mainland. Beginning with Ch'ing rule, many began to make permanent homes in Taiwan, but even those who lived their whole lives on the island still continued to be buried in their ancestral homes in Fukien. Those who made permanent homes in Taiwan began to bring genealogies from their ancestral homes, and in this way established new families and lineages in Taiwan. Many genealogies begin with the first ancestor to move to Taiwan but have little information for earlier ancestors on the mainland.

Taiwan was under the administration of Fukien province until 1892, when it was made a separate province. Taiwan was a separate province for only three years. Following the Sino-Japanese War of 1895, it was ceded to Japan. The Japanese occupation produced most of the available records for genealogical research other than the clan genealogies. During this period of time, the Japanese carried out the first island-wide censuses, land registrations, and household registrations. Household registrations were particularly thorough since the colonial police force used the registers to help control the Chinese on the island. One of the most important results of the Japanese occupation was the almost complete cessation of Chinese migration from the Mainland and an influx of several hundred thousand Japanese to the island, the majority of which returned to Japan after the war.

In 1945, after the defeat of Japan, Taiwan became a province of the Republic of China. The reversion marked a mass exodus of Japanese nationals and the renewed influx of Chinese from the Mainland. The new government carried out another census and modified the old Japanese household and land registration systems. The most important consequence of the reversion was the change of the official documentary language from Japanese to Chinese. The last major movement of people into Taiwan came with the fall of Mainland China to the communists in 1949. At that time nearly two million mainland-born Chinese moved into the province of Taiwan.

# Major Genealogical Record Sources in Taiwan

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In identifying ancestors, genealogical researchers need the answers to four key questions regarding sources:

1. What records exist that will aid in the identification process?
2. What periods of time do the existing records cover?
3. What genealogical information appears in those records?
4. Are the records available for research?

The two tables which follow contain answers to the above questions for the major genealogical sources of Taiwan. These sources are listed, together with the time period covered, the type of information given, and the availability of the source.

Table A indicates which sources are available for research for each particular period of time. Table B provides more detailed information about the records listed in table A.

# Major Source Availability

TABLE A

Type of Record	960 (Sung)	1368 (Ming)	1644 (Ch'ing)	1895 (Japanese Occupation)	1945 (Republic of China)
1. Census 戶口名簿					
2. Temple Records 廟寺宮等種記錄					
3. Household Registration 戶籍登記					
4. Newspapers 報紙					
5. Official Documents 公文					
6. Christian Church Records 教會記錄					
7. Land Records 土地記錄					
8. Ancestral Tablets 神主・神位					
9. Family Documents 家傳					
10. Tombstone Inscriptions 墓碑・墓表・墓誌名					
11. Local Histories 地方志					
12. Examination Rosters 登科錄・選舉表・科目表					
13. Clan Genealogies 宗譜・族譜・家譜					
14. Miscellaneous 雜類					
15. Oral Genealogies 口傳家譜					

TABLE B

Type of Record	Period Covered	Type of Information Given	Availability
1. Census <sup>1</sup> 戶口名簿	1945 to present	Vital statistics concerning each member of the household; similar to the information found on the household register	Kept in each household
2. Temple Records 廟寺宮等種記錄	About 1900 to present	<p>Lists of children provided for the temple gods, usually including each child's name, birth date, and parents' names and address(es)</p> <p>Lists of people who have had their ancestral tablets placed in local temples and shrines, attended by the monks, nuns, or priests</p> <p>Lists of people whose cremated remains are in the pagoda attached to Buddhist temples or monasteries</p>	<p>Local temples. Usually kept by the large, more important temples and shrines. Available to relatives</p> <p>Located in Buddhist monasteries and tutelary shrines, available to relatives</p> <p>Buddhist monasteries; available to relatives</p>
3. Household Registration 戶籍登記	About 1896-1945 <sup>2</sup> (Japanese Occupation)	<p><b>Active Registers (現戶):</b> Head of household; previous head of household; current address; previous address; permanent residence; names of parents, spouse, children; dates and places of birth, marriage, divorce, death; order of birth, sex; adoptions; name of natural or adopted parents; changes of name; date of adoption or dissolution of adoption; date and reason for entry and/or removal from the register; relationship to head of household; division of the household; women with bound feet; ethnic origin</p> <p><b>Temporary Registers (寄留戶):</b> Mostly registers for Japanese nationals living in Taiwan; includes same information as above</p> <p><b>Inactive Registers (除戶):</b> Same as above, but includes the reason for the register becoming inactive (death of the head of the household, change of permanent address, etc.)</p>	Available to relatives only in the ch'u (區), shih (市), chen (鎮), or hsiang (鄉) local registration offices

<sup>1</sup> Censuses have been taken regularly since 1900, but the schedules are not open to the public. Additions to the census records kept in the home are made when the event is registered at the household registration office, or by police officials during the regular census.

<sup>2</sup> Registration began in most areas within a few years after the beginning of the Japanese Occupation, but the registers often include information from the early 1800's. The entire population was re-registered in 1946 upon the return of Taiwan to China.

Type of Record	Period Covered	Type of Information Given	Availability
3. Household Registration (Continued)	1946 to present (Republic of China)	<p><b>Active Registers (現戶):</b> Same as above, with additional information on educational level and occupation of head of household</p> <p><b>Temporary Registers (遷徙人口):</b> Mostly, registers of families of Mainland origin; includes same information listed above</p> <p><b>Inactive Registers (除戶):</b> Same as above</p>	Same as above
4. Newspapers 報紙	1895 to present	Obituaries; birth, marriage, and death notices of influential families; other facts of genealogical importance	Newspaper offices; various public and university libraries; Central National Library and its branches
5. Official Documents 公文	1895-1945	<p><b>Compilation of Official Records of the (Japanese) Governor-General of Taiwan (台灣總督府公文類纂):</b> Includes resumes for all civil officials serving during the Japanese occupation (日據時代文官履歷書), other facts of genealogical importance</p>	Taiwan Provincial Historical Research Commission, Taichung, Taiwan
6. Christian Church Records 教會記錄	1644-1895	<p><b>Christenings or births:</b> Date and place; name of child; parents' names and residence(s)</p> <p><b>Marriages:</b> Names; date and place of marriage</p> <p><b>Death and burials:</b> Name; date and place of death or burial; sometimes age at death and name of spouse or parents</p> <p><b>Memberships:</b> Name; date of baptism; sometimes parents' names and names of spouse and children</p>	Local churches
7. Land Records 土地記錄	About 1850 to present	<b>Title deeds (契券•契約):</b> Names of people involved in the transaction; location and size of property; date of sale or transfer; sometimes includes names of parents or relatives	Some owned by public and university libraries, museums, and individual families

Type of Record	Period Covered	Type of Information Given	Availability
9. Family Records (Continued)		<p><b>Marriage Contracts:</b> Bride's and groom's names, birth dates, and several generations of ancestry for both</p> <p><b>Adoption and Heirship Agreements:</b> Includes name; adoptive and natural parents' names; other facts of genealogical importance</p> <p><b>Birth Records (生時簿):</b> Name; exact time of birth; other facts of genealogical importance</p>	<p>Same as above</p> <p>Same as above</p> <p>Same as above</p>
10. Tombstone Inscriptions  墓碑 • 墓表 • 墓誌名	About 1600 to present	Name; wife's name (often including given name); date of burial; ancestral place of origin; often children's and grandchildren's names, birth and death dates; sometimes includes the names of the living sons and grandsons who set up the gravestone, with the date; occasionally includes longer inscriptions describing migrations of the ancestor with more extensive genealogical information	Local, private, and public cemeteries; some collected in local histories and literary collections (文集)
11. Local Histories  地方志	1368 to present <sup>6</sup>	Genealogy of local clans and families; biographies and biographical sketches; lists of "chaste widows"; famous women and their husbands; lists of the elderly; collections of tombstone inscriptions and epitaphs; rosters of local officials with biographical sketches; civil and military examination rosters; miscellaneous information on geography, place names, and local history	Various public and university libraries; some at the Church genealogical library
12. Examination Rosters <sup>7</sup>  登科錄 • 選舉表 • 科目表	1368-1900	Surname and given names; place of origin; age; year of examination; degrees received; names of relatives and parents; official positions and titles; sometimes includes other important dates such as the date of death; some with up to ten generations of ancestry	Various public and university libraries; some at the Church genealogical library; many included in the local histories

<sup>6</sup> Taiwan was not made a separate province until 1889. As a result, much information relating to Taiwan is found in the local histories for Fukien province.

<sup>7</sup> Includes civil and military examination rosters for several types of degrees. Some rosters from Fukien Province include information about Taiwan degree holders.



Type of Record	Period Covered	Type of Information Given	Availability
13. Clan Genealogies and Family Registers 宗譜 • 族譜 • 家譜	Sung <sup>8</sup> Dynasty (960-1279) to present	Name (surname and given names); place of ancestral origin; place of residence; generation number; name of the lineage or branch family; dates of birth, death, burial, and occasionally marriage; surname of wife or wives; place of ancestral origin; names, birth order, and sex of children; spouses of children; official titles and ranks; date and degree obtained from civil or military examinations; name changes and adoptions; biographies of prominent ancestors; portraits; genealogical tables; pedigree charts; family history; clan rules and regulations; movements and migrations of the family or clan; location of gravesite; maps and diagrams of family burial grounds, ancestral halls, and ancestral places of origin	Most privately owned; some in public and university libraries; some at the Church genealogical library
14. Miscellaneous Sources 雜類	1368 to present	<b>Chronological Biographies (年譜):</b> Name; names of parents and spouse; children's and grandchildren's names; birth, death, and marriage dates; ancestry (up to ten generations); titles and official positions; other facts of genealogical importance  <b>Autobiographies, Diaries, Journals, and Correspondence:</b> Various facts of genealogical importance	Various public and university libraries; some at the Church genealogical library  Same as above
15. Oral Genealogies <sup>9</sup> 口傳家譜	About 1300 to present	Names; sometimes names of spouse and children; relationships; legends, stories, and traditions about certain ancestors	For aborigine groups only (varies with tribe, but probably available to relatives or close friends only); some collected, transcribed and published by the Academia Sinica for certain villages

<sup>8</sup> Few clan genealogies were kept before the Sung dynasty, but many of those that were kept include information from legendary periods. Most genealogies in Taiwan are for the period of the Ch'ing dynasty (A.D. 1644-1912), but many include information for the Ming period (A.D. 1368-1644). Few include accurate information for earlier periods. Each record varies greatly in style, generational depth, and number of entries and detail, but may be considered accurate beginning from the dates of its earlier preface. Many are copies of older editions.

<sup>9</sup> Some oral genealogies include up to twenty generations of ancestry, although most deal only with the main lines of descent. Genealogical information is especially important to chiefs and priests, and as a result they may have more extensive genealogies committed to memory than do some others. Emphasis on oral genealogies varies from tribe to tribe: some groups may have excellent genealogies, while others have none at all. Dates are usually not included in the genealogies.

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## **Other Resources: Taiwan**

Taiwan Map

<http://geology.com/world/taiwan-satellite-image.shtml>

Taiwan Genealogy Forum

<http://genforum.genealogy.com/taiwan/>

Chinese Genealogical Resources

<http://fuzzo.com/genealogy/Asia/chinagen.htm>

Cyndi's List – Asia & the Pacific

<http://www.cyndislist.com/asia.htm>

National Central Library of Taiwan

<http://www.ncl.edu.tw/mp.asp?mp=2>

National Archives Administration, Republic of China (Taiwan)

<http://www.archives.gov.tw/english/Default.aspx>