



文化的脉络

Chinese Surnames

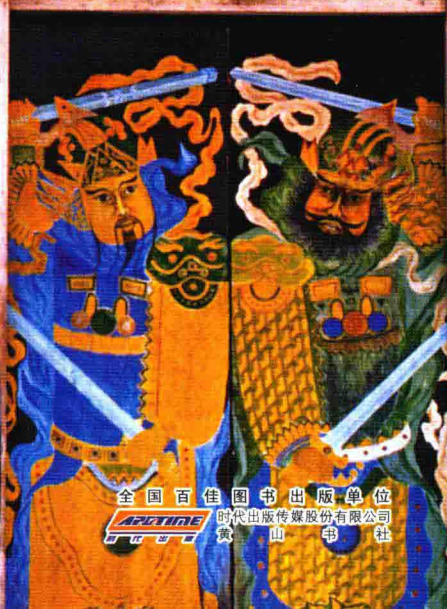
姓氏

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上官天笑◎编著

欽點翰林

葉氏支祠



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XING SHI

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出品人 任耕耘

总策划 任耕耘 蒋一谈

项目总监 马磊 钟鸣

责任编辑 程景

责任印制 戚帅

图文编辑 王新

装帧设计 李晶 王萌萌

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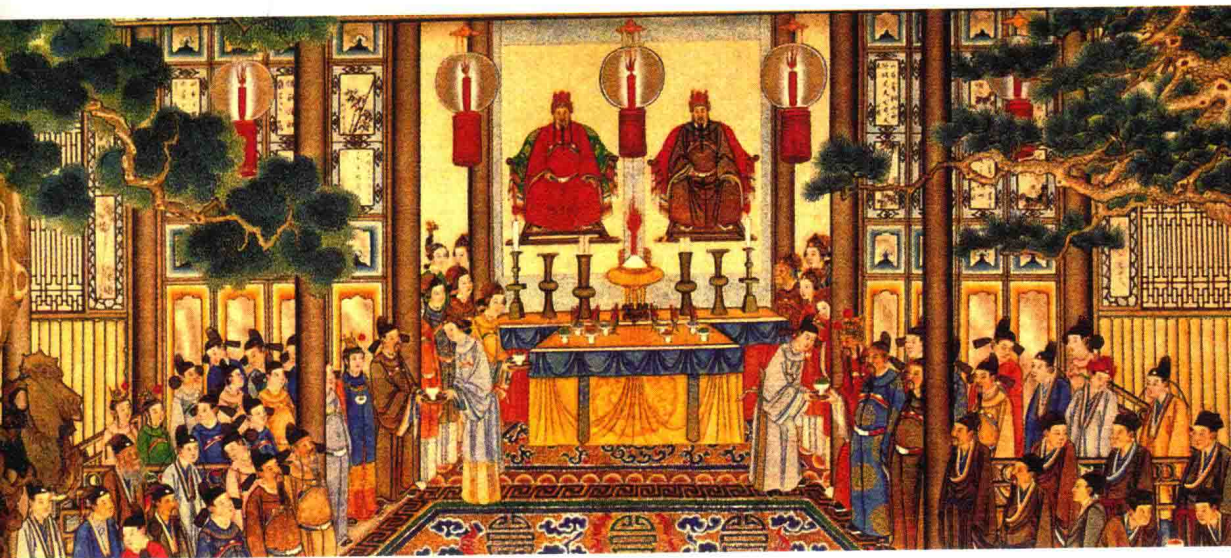
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中华姓氏寻根

Searching for the Roots of Chinese Surnames

姓氏作为重要的媒介，能够帮助人们追溯历史、寻根过去。中华民族以炎黄子孙自居，以身为炎黄子孙为荣，这种以共同祖先的姓氏作为血脉传承纽带的文化传统，构成了中华民族的凝聚力。

As an important medium, surnames can help people trace their history, and discover their roots. Chinese people are proud to claim themselves as descendants of Emperor Yan and Huang. The cultural tradition that the basis of Chinese surnames derive from the same ancestors creates a bond between all Chinese people.





> 姓氏的来历

中华姓氏是中华文化体系的重要组成部分。在氏族社会，姓、氏先后产生；在夏商周时期，姓、氏在分封制度的影响下得以发展；在秦汉时期，姓、氏统一，合并为“姓氏”。

据传，姓氏最早起源于图腾崇拜。上古时代，原始人相信自然界万物有灵，对图腾的崇拜开始产生，他们将某种动物或植物等当作本部族的保护神来祭祀，还将它们作为部落特有的徽号或标志，后来则逐渐衍变成了最古老的姓氏。

相传，夏族首领禹的母亲因吞食了薏苡而生下了他。从此，薏苡便成为了夏族人的图腾。又因为孩子是由女性生育的，便取“女”字作为偏旁，又取“苡”字的下半部分“以”

> Origins of Surnames

Chinese surnames is an important part of Chinese cultural system. In the clan society, surnames (*Xing*) and clan names (*Shi*) came into being successively. In the Xia Dynasty (approx. 2070 B.C.-1600 B.C.), Shang Dynasty (1600 B.C.-1046 B.C.), and Zhou Dynasty (1046 B.C.-221 B.C.), surnames and clan names developed under the feudal system of enfeoffment. During the Qin Dynasty (221 B.C.-206 B.C.) and Han Dynasty (206 B.C.-220 A.D.), surnames and clan names became one under the general term of surname (*Xing Shi*).

It is generally held that surnames originated from totemism. In ancient times, people's belief in animism espoused worship of totems. Certain animals and plants were worshipped and offered sacrifices as the guardian deities of their clans. They were also referred in

字，最终形成了“姒”姓。

《史记》中也有类似的记载：

“殷契，母曰简狄，有娥氏之女，为帝喾次妃。三人行浴，见玄鸟堕其卵，简狄取吞之，因孕生契。”契是商族的祖先，他的母亲因为吞食了玄鸟所产下的卵而生下了他。由此玄鸟便成为了商族的图腾标志，商族人以子（即卵）为姓。



• 大禹像

Portrait of Yu the Great

the emblems or symbols of their tribes which, later, gradually became the oldest surnames.

The legend has it that the mother of Yu, head of the Tribe Xia, gobbled a plant called Job's tears (a Poales plant) and then gave birth to Yu. Thereafter, Job's tears became the totem of the Tribe Xia. Since children were given birth by females, the Chinese character “女” (female, *Nǚ*) was adopted to replace the original upper part of the character of “苙” (Job's tears, *Yì*), the surname of “姒” (*Sì*) was henceforth formed.

Similar tales can also be found in the *Historical Records*, “Jian Di, Yin Qi's mother and daughter of the clan of You Song, was the second wife to Emperor Ku. While bathing together, Jian Di saw a Xuan Bird (a legendary bird) laying an egg. She ate the egg and was pregnant with Yin Qi.” Yin Qi was the ancestor of the Tribe Shang. Since his mother born him after eating Xuan Bird's egg, the bird became the totem of the Tribe Shang and the character *Zi* (meaning egg) was used as the surname of the tribe.

Surnames made their first appearance during the times of matriarchal society when people “only knew their mothers instead of fathers”. Men and women both

名、字、号

Names, Courtesy Names, and Title Names

名

在姓氏还没有产生的时候，古人最先使用的是“名”。名是一个人的标志性符号，即一个人的代称。名，最早起源于氏族社会，常与姓连用。儒学经典《周礼》中记载：“婚生三月而加名。”

Names

As an identifiable symbol for a person, the given name originated in clan society and has been a personal indicator used in combination with the surname. Ancient people used given names before surnames came into being. In the Confucian classic *Rites of Zhou*, it is recorded that, "A born-in-wedlock baby is to be given a name at the third month after birth."

字

字，又称“表”，是除了名之外古人的又一称呼。南北朝时期的文学家颜之推（531—约595）在其著作《颜氏家训》中写道：“古者，名以正体，字以表德。”字，是与名相关联的一个称谓，即别名，多用来表示一个人的品德。古人一般都有名和字，男子一般在二十岁行冠礼（男子的成年礼）的时候取字，女子一般在十五岁行笄礼（女子成年礼）时取字。古人在自称的时候用名，在称呼他人的时候则用字，以表尊敬。如今，取字的习俗已不多见。

Courtesy Names

The courtesy name, also known as the style name, was used in addition to the given name by ancient people. Yan Zhitui (531-approx 595), a literary writer of the Southern and Northern Dynasties (420-589), wrote in his *Admonitions of the Yan Clan* that, "In ancient times, given names were used to identify a person while courtesy names were meant to declare a person's virtues." A courtesy name is related to the given name of a person; it's an alternative given name used to indicate a person's virtues. People in the ancient times used to have both the given name and the courtesy name. Courtesy names were given when boys attended the crowning ceremony (the come-of-age ceremony for boys) at the age of 20 and girls joined the hair-pinning ceremony (the come-of-age ceremony for girls) at 15. People in ancient times usually used given names when referring to themselves and used courtesy names when referring to others as a gesture of respect. Nowadays, courtesy names are rarely used.



号

号，是古人除了名、字之外的别称。据记载，号在春秋时期就已出现。相对于名和字，号的选取要自由得多，不必受到家族、辈分、制度等方面的影响，根据每个人的不同喜好而选取。

Title Names

The title name is an alternative that ancient people used in addition to the given name and the courtesy name. According to records, title names were already used in the Spring and Autumn Period (770 B.C.-476 B.C.). In contrast to given names and courtesy names, title names were chosen without influence from family background, family hierarchy, social systems, and the like. Everyone could choose the title name to one's own liking.



• 玄鸟

出自《山海经》，玄鸟即黑色的燕子。

Xuan Bird

Originally seen in the *Classic of Mountains and Seas*, the Xuan Bird is a black swallow.

姓，最早出现在母系氏族社会时期。这一时期，人们“只知其母，不知其父”，人们的姓是从女性始祖那里继承来的，无论男女都有姓。姓的本义为标志家族系统的

inherited their surnames from female ancestors. Surnames were originally used as characters to mark the family and clan systems. It stood for the common blood relationship for descendants.

According to the definition in *Explaining and Analyzing Characters* by Xu Shen, a philologist of the Eastern Han Dynasty (25-220), “*Xing* (‘姓’ in Chinese, meaning surname) means the birth of a human. In ancient times, *Xing* denoted a heavenly-impregnated mother giving birth to a child, hence the term ‘son of heaven’. The character is composed of ‘女’ (*Nü*, female) and ‘生’ (*Sheng*, give birth to), a homonym of *Sheng* (the sound).” The definition shows that



• 女娲补天

传说，古时候天露了一个洞，导致地上火灾、洪水不断，猛兽也经常出没伤人，民不聊生。于是女娲炼五色石头以补天，最终解救了地上的普通百姓。

Nüwa Mending Firmament

As the legend goes, there was a time in remote antiquity that a hole in the sky gave rise to fires and incessant flooding on earth, and people were being hurt frequently by animals. Seeing people losing their means of livelihood, Nüwa used five-colored stones to mend the hole in the sky and eventually saved all the common people on earth.

字，代表着子孙后代的共同血缘。

东汉（25—220）时期文字学家许慎在其撰写的《说文解字》中对“姓”进行了注释：“姓，人所生也。古之神圣，母感天而生子，故称天子。从女从生，生亦声。”

surnames were originated from mothers; therefore, old surnames in the ancient times, such as “姜” (*Jiang*), “姬” (*Ji*), “姒” (*Si*), “嬴” (*Ying*), “姑” (*Ji*), “姮” (*Yun*), and the like, were all composed of the Chinese radical “女” (*Nü*, female). From the very beginning, surnames have been used as marks to prevent same-surname marriages. *White Tiger Hall Annotations*, a classic from the Han Dynasty (206 B.C. - 220 A.D.) to reconcile scholastic contradictions, explains: the reason why people have surnames is that surnames can promote affection, emphasize blood relationships, differentiate people from animals, and prevent same-surname marriage. During the periods of primitive society, it was recognized that “people with the same surname came from the same family root”. Same-surname marriage was against ethical codes, and might beget deformed births. Therefore, a taboo arose to forbid marriage between people bearing the same surname.

The clan name first appeared in patriarchal society times. During this period, men had displaced women as leaders. Clan names were inherited from patriarchs and only males were entitled to clan names. Due to the rise of the



伏羲、女娲

相传，伏羲和女娲为人首蛇身的神人。伏羲与女娲既是兄妹，也是夫妻。东汉皇甫谧的史书著作《帝王世纪》中记载：“太昊帝庖牺氏，风姓也。”伏羲与女娲因生于成纪（今甘肃天水）风沟，而姓“风”，是中国最早使用“风”姓的人。

宋代（960—1279）典籍《太平御览》记载：“伏羲坐于方坛之上，听八风之气，乃画八卦。”八卦是伏羲观察自然万物而发明的。除此之外，伏羲教先民结网打渔，投矛狩猎，用兽皮缝制衣服，并与女娲一起开创了最早的婚姻制度。西汉典籍《淮南子》中记载了女娲炼五色石以补苍天的神话传说。

Fuxi and Nüwa

Legend has it that Fuxi and Nüwa were gods with human heads and snake bodies. Fuxi and Nüwa were both siblings and spouses. As shown in *Records of Emperors and Kings* by Huangfu Mi in the Eastern Han Dynasty (25-220), "Fuxi was surnamed Feng (wind)." Fuxi and Nüwa were surnamed Feng since they were born at Fenggou (lit. Ditch of Wind). They were the first to use the surname Feng in China.



• 甲骨文“风”

甲骨文是在殷商时期（前1600—前1046）出现的一种具有比较严密系统体系的文字，已有3000多年的历史，是中国目前已知的最早的文字。这些文字被刻在龟甲、兽骨上，因此得名甲骨文。

Character of “风” (Feng, Wind) in Oracle Bone Script

As the earliest known written language in China dating back to around 3,000 years ago, the oracle bone script was a comparatively systemized writing system which appeared in the Shang Dynasty (1600 B.C.-1046 B.C.). These written languages were inscribed on tortoise shells and animal bones for oracle purposes, and were thus known as the oracle bone script.

The *Imperial Readings of the Taiping Era* of the Song Dynasty (960-1279) recorded that, "Fuxi sat on a square platform, listened to the wind from eight directions, and drew the Eight Diagrams." The Eight Diagrams were invented by Fuxi through his observation of numerous beings in nature. In addition, Fuxi also taught ancient people how to make fishing nets, use spears to hunt, and make clothing out of furs. Fuxi and Nüwa also created the earliest marriage system. The myth in *Huai Nan Zi* (lit. *The Masters/Philosophers of Huainan*) of the Western Han Dynasty (206 B.C.-25 A.D.) also recorded that Nüwa used stones of five colors to mend the damaged firmament.



• 伏羲创八卦图

八卦，以“—”为阳，以“--”为阴，依次为乾、坤、震、巽、坎、艮、离、兑，分别与自然界的天、地、雷、风、水、山、火、泽相对应。古时，人们用八卦进行占卜。

Fuxi Creating the Eight Diagrams

The Eight Diagrams are built up on two constituent symbols: the straight horizontal line “—” stands for *Yang* and the broken horizontal line “--” represents *Yin*. The Eight Diagrams are *Qian*, *Kun*, *Zhen*, *Xun*, *Kan*, *Gen*, *Li*, and *Dui*, representing respectively the eight phenomenon of heaven, earth, thunder, wind, water, mountain, fire, and lake in nature. In ancient times, people used the Eight Diagrams for divination.



• 伏羲女娲图（唐）

Picture of Fuxi and Nüwa (Tang Dynasty, 618-907)

这是说，姓源自于孕育产子的母亲，因此上古时期古老的姓，例如姜、姬、姒、嬴、姑、妘等都是“女”字为偏旁。姓从出现开始，就被人们用作“别婚姻”的标志。汉代（前206—公元220）典籍《白虎通义》中有相关记载：“人所以

hierarchical system, in clans where people use the same surnames, differences in wealth and class came about. Therefore, further divisions of clans branched out on the basis of the original consanguinity. These new branches moved out of original gathering places and scattered in different areas. They began to use different clan names. In ancient times, people used clan names to distinguish between high and low status in identity, positions, virtues and achievements, skills and competences and so forth. In *White Tiger Hall Annotations: Chapter of Names*, it says, “Why are there clan names? The clan name is used to indicate virtues and skills.” Generally speaking, both nobles and ordinary people could use clan names, though some clan names were exclusively used by certain nobility. Despite the fact that some ordinary people did have clan names, they were still low-classed in comparison with nobles with high virtues and great achievements, for





有姓者何？所以崇恩爱、厚亲亲、远禽兽、别婚姻也。”因为在原始社会时期，人们认为“同姓是一家”，同姓结婚违背伦理道德。当时人还认识到同姓男女繁育的后代常出现畸形，于是产生了“同姓不婚”的禁忌。

氏，最早出现在父系氏族社会时期。这一时期，男性取代女性占据主导地位。氏是从父系始祖那里继承来的，且只有男子才称氏。由于阶级制度的产生，同姓宗族中出现了贫富差距和等级分化，因此在原有的血缘关系基础上分散出了不同的分支。这些分支从原有的聚集地迁出后，分散在了不同的地域，用不同的“氏”来命名。古人用氏来区别身份、地位、功德、技力等的高低贵贱，《白虎通义·姓名》中记载：“所以有氏者何？所以贵功德，贱伎力。”一般而言，贵族、平民都可以用氏，只是有一些氏为贵族所专有。平民即使有氏，相对于功高德重的贵族而言也相对低贱，例如以屠宰牲畜为职业的屠氏等。

从父系氏族社会时期开始，姓

instance, those surnamed Tu (butchering) who took animal-butchering as their profession.

Since the beginning of the patriarchal period, a system that surnames and clan names were both used was established. In the Xia Dynasty (approx. 2070 B.C.-1600 B.C.), Shang Dynasty (1600 B.C.-1046 B.C.), and Zhou Dynasty (1046 B.C.-221 B.C.), this system continued to be used. For example, the monarchs of the Xia Dynasty (approx. 2070 B.C.-1600 B.C.) had the surname of Si and the clan name of Xia; Shang monarchs had Zi for the surname and Shang for the clan name; while the Zhou monarchs had Ji and Zhou respectively for their surname and clan name.

The Xia Dynasty (approx. 2070 B.C.-1600 B.C.) was a society where the slavery system was established. Due to a man's higher status and functions, coupled with the influence of the expanded range of human activities, surnames and the matriarchal system of blood relations they stood for gradually fell apart, losing their practical function of preventing same-surname marriage while clan names gradually developed on the basis of the patriarchal clan system. The government of Zhou implemented



与氏并行的双轨制度得以确立。在夏商周时期，姓氏双轨制度仍然延续，例如夏代国君以姒为姓，以夏为氏；商代国君以子为姓，以商为氏；周代国君以姬为姓，以周为氏。

夏代（约前2070—前1600），奴隶制社会建立并逐步完善，男性



• 龙凤纹瓷器（清）

龙、凤图腾是中华民族最为古老的图腾符号，传说龙图腾是由黄帝创造，凤图腾则是由黄帝的妻子嫫祖创造。龙、凤在中华民族心中是吉祥的象征。

Chinaware of Dragon and Phoenix(Qing Dynasty,1644-1911)

Dragons and phoenixes are the oldest totem of Chinese people. Legend has it that the totem of dragon was created by Yellow Emperor while the totem of phoenix was created by his wife Lei Zu. Dragon and phoenix are symbols of auspice in Chinese culture.

the enfeoffment system during the Western Zhou Dynasty (1046 B.C.-771 B.C.) with land conferred and clan names dubbed for the purpose of solidifying the political power of the state. In the enfeoffment system, vassalage was awarded to imperial kinsmen, to officials with acknowledged achievements and to leaders of ancient tribes so that they could build up their vassal states in various areas. Based on the location of their vassal states, they were conferred with clan names which could be passed down to their heirs. While the branches belonging to the same clan increased, the amount of clan names also multiplied accordingly during this period. In addition to using the names of vassal states or places as clan names, ancient people also used official titles, posthumous titles (titles conferred on rulers or high-status people after they died), and professions of their ancestors and others as clan names.

During the Spring and Autumn Period (770 B.C.-476 B.C.) and Warring States Period (475 B.C.-221 B.C.), the national power of imperial court of Zhou waned while feudal lords were dividing and seizing the land for their own interests in competition for



的地位和作用远远高于女性，且受到人类活动范围扩大的影响，姓所代表的母系血缘系统逐渐趋于瓦解，不再具有“别婚姻”的实际作用，而氏则在宗法制的基础上逐渐发展起来。西周时期（前1046—前771），周王朝实行分封制，“胙之土而命之氏”，以巩固国家政权。分封制就是将同姓的王族、有功之臣和先代的部落首领等，分封到各地去做诸侯，建立诸侯国，并根据

hegemony. The original enfeoffment system collapsed and clan names, which represented one's status and identity, gradually lost its original function. The difference between surnames and clan names became blurred. They eventually became synonyms. Prior to this, the difference between surnames and clan names served mainly three purposes: (1). to differentiate the exclusive usage of clan names by males and surnames by females; (2). to distinguish between the



• 宜侯矢簋复制品（西周）（图片提供：FOTOE）

簋是一种盛食器，此宜侯矢簋上刻有铭文120多字，记载了周康王册封矢为宜侯的历史。此铭文是关于西周分封制的重要史料。

The Replica of Yihou Ce Gui(Western Zhou Dynasty,1046 B.C.-771 B.C.)

Gui is a food container.The Yihou Ce Gui was inscribed more than 120 epigraphs,the record was probably Zhou Kang Wang canonized Ce for Yihou.The epigraph was important historical materials that the government of Zhou implemented the enfeoffment system during the Western Zhou Dynasty.