

族谱与海外 华人移民研究

Genealogies and Chinese Migration Studies

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Genealogies and Chinese Migration Studies

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1. Chinese genealogies.
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P r e f a c e

This collection of papers is from the *Genealogies and Chinese Overseas Studies* Conference organised by the Singapore-based Chinese Heritage Centre on 19 August 2000.

The Chinese Heritage Centre was established in 1995 to promote a better understanding and appreciation of the carriers of the Chinese heritage, the communities of people of Chinese descent outside China. Following the completion of its major *Encyclopedia of the Chinese Overseas* project in 1998, the Board of the Chinese Heritage Centre had identified Chinese genealogies as an important project in the Centre's work program.

The value of Chinese genealogies has long been recognised in several fields of scholarly inquiry. Such historical materials have shed considerable light on the importance of lineage and the family in Chinese society, local traditions and socio-economic change, population growth and movement, and biographies of distinguished individuals. The importance of genealogies in understanding Chinese overseas migration has only been recognised more recently. This is due to the convergence of a renewed interest in genealogical records, many of which were destroyed during China's turbulent Cultural Revolution, and a growing interest in family roots among Chinese overseas. The latter has been encouraged by the opening of China, growing affluence, information technology advances, and the search for identity among the young and old.

In 1999, the Chinese Heritage Centre with the assistance of Research Fellow Mr Choi Kwai Keong, started to plan a series of research, documentation and public education initiatives on Chinese genealogies. An international conference was planned for 2000 to encourage international exchange of research experience and insights into the compilation of genealogical records as well as the use of these valuable documents to understand the migration and settlement of Chinese in Southeast Asia and other parts of the world. The Centre Library under the guidance of Mr Choi also

embarked on the collection of genealogical records compiled by Chinese clan associations in Singapore.

The genealogical records collected by the Centre enabled an exhibition of these documents to be mounted at the conference held at the Singapore Federation of Chinese Clan Associations building. Additional records on loan from the Federation greatly enriched the materials on display. The Chinese Heritage Centre is grateful to the Federation for its assistance and cooperation in organising the conference and the exhibition of genealogical records.

Several individuals have also contributed greatly to the success of these events. In particular, we would like to thank the eight conference speakers, sessions Chairman Dr Gwee Yee Hean, President of the South Seas Society, and two Discussants, Mr Liaw Ching Liou, consultant to the ChineseRoots project of Cybersia, and Dr Liu Hong, Chinese Studies Department, National University of Singapore. Centre staff, including Ms Dawn Choo, Ms Siow Cheah Hui, Mr Hong Teck Long, and Ms Goh Lai Khim provided various support during the planning and organisation of the conference. Centre Manager Mr Brian Lee assisted in the gathering and publishing of the conference papers.

The book is divided into two parts. Part One deals with problems in the compilation of genealogies and suggestions for improving the reliability and presentation of genealogical records. Several scholars for example have affirmed the value of genealogies as the common people's history, recording information not found in scholar-officials' writings. Ironically, attempts to gentrify lineage or embellish one's pedigree by claiming links to distinguished scholars or officials have been a common flaw in later-day genealogical records. This problem is also found in the clan or family genealogies compiled by Chinese overseas. As the papers noted, attention to details and honesty are essential in ensuring accuracy and reliability in genealogies. Also, increasing ease of travel and information flows, facilitated by new technologies, should help us to improve the quality of genealogical research and records. Part Two of the book offers fresh insights into how genealogies can be

used to better understand the causes, processes and consequences of Chinese overseas migration seen through the eyes of lineage groups. Analyses of regional groups, including the Cantonese, Hainanese, Hokkien, Hakka and Teochew highlight similarities and differences in the migration and settlement experiences of the Chinese in Taiwan and Chinese overseas.

The publication of this book was delayed partly by our attempts to translate the papers into English. The English version would have been a welcome contribution given the dearth of English-language publications on Chinese genealogical studies. However, such an undertaking would require considerable proficiency in classical Chinese and a strong command of English. Financial and other constraints have prevented the full translation of the Chinese texts. Instead, with the assistance of Mr Ong Soon Keong, key observations and conclusions are summarised in English for the benefit of the wider audience.

The Chinese Heritage Centre is delighted that it is able to join China's National Key Centre of Southeast Asian Studies at Xiamen University to publish this collection of important research papers. Fujian, Guangdong and Hainan Provinces were the main sources of early Chinese settlers to Southeast Asia. It is hoped that this collaboration between the Chinese Heritage Centre and the National Key Centre of Southeast Asian Studies will lead to a greater sharing of research resources, experience and expertise in Chinese Overseas Studies. In the emerging field of Chinese genealogies and migration studies, the cooperation of scholars in the Mainland, Taiwan, Southeast Asia and other parts of the world is necessary to ensure a fuller understanding of the criss-crossing of migration, family and clan ties.

We hope that this book will offer insights into the compilation of genealogy records and how such records can help clan associations, families and individuals to better understand both Chinese migration and the role played by the family in the long history of Chinese migration.

Kee Pookong

Ancestral and Cultural Identities: Some Issues on Genealogies in Guangdong During the Ming and Qing Dynasties

Liu Zhiwei

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This paper seeks to examine, through the analysis of certain characteristics in genealogies from the Guangfu (around Canton) and Hakka regions, the relationships between records on the ancestors in genealogies and the identification with community, locality, and the state.

As lineage membership records, genealogies are products of specific cultural values and social order. Modern genealogies represent the confluence of two genealogical traditions: the scholar-official, or gentry written tradition, and the grassroots' oral transmission tradition. The Guangfu and Hakka genealogies of the Ming and Qing dynasties, which manifest the 'gentrification' of the popular oral genealogical tradition, typify this development. It is this evolution that leads to the lineage confusion one often finds in genealogies after the Song dynasty. Most written genealogies were compiled only after the Ming dynasty. Genealogical records relied heavily on the oral tradition for evidence, which unfortunately can provide detailed information on only a few generations of ancestors. To trace distant ancestors, genealogy compilers often had to make fictitious claims of blood ties to eminent and esteemed families.

Although often criticised as a blemish on genealogies as reliable historical records, claims of blood ties to prestigious ancient families were made not merely to flaunt one's pedigree. During the Ming and Qing dynasties, it became essential for migrants to the South to demarcate themselves from local minorities and people without official registry. Tracing one's ancestry to noble families in the Central Plains and making it 'authentic' by recording that claim in one's genealogy would allow one to gain legitimate registry in the

new settlement. Moreover, this would also give one access to privileges originally reserved for scholar-officials, such as the rights to build an ancestral hall. This observation is supported by evidence drawn from the genealogy of the He family, which thrived in the Pearl River Delta.

The value of a genealogy thus inheres not in the historical facts it can provide to later-day historians, but in the kind of resources it can provide to the lineage which it showcases. Although building fictitious claims into written genealogies goes against the value system of scholar-officials, this practice may simultaneously supply proof of the popularisation of genealogies and the confirmation of the scholar-official culture by grassroots practice. In other words, this is both a gentrification and a popularisation process, reaffirming the scholar-official's cultural norm on the one hand, and establishing a new model for the compilation of genealogies on the other.

An important feature of genealogies from the Guangfu and Hakka regions is the emphasis placed on both the lineage's household register and its origin. Many lineages, for example, trace their ancestry back to the legendary migration from Zhujixiang at Nanxiong. This is because, according to this legend, the pioneering migrants from Zhujixiang received official approval during the Ming dynasty to migrate to the Pearl River Delta and immediately registered with the local authorities once they arrived. Once registered, they became liable for taxes, while also being given residence rights and allowed to buy lands. That is to say, household registry was an important component of legal settlement. Registration and settlement were carefully entered in lineage genealogies because, during both the Ming and Qing dynasties, household registration was a symbol of social status, and only with such legal status would a family be allowed to acquire land or take the civil service examination.

As for the difference between Guangfu and Hakka genealogies, Guangfu, having more wealthy lineages, had more massive, printed genealogies. Moreover, Guangfu genealogies appear to have gone further in the 'gentrification' process.

The Value of Hainanese Genealogies and the Injection of a Grassroots Perspective in New Genealogical Works

Zhou Weimin

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After genealogies became objects of scholarly study, two contrasting approaches to them appear to have arisen, an intellectual perspective and an opposing grassroots perspective. The grassroots perspective characterises an independent and creative spirit that, during genealogy compilation, cannot be encumbered by any external force. If genealogies are to maintain their vibrancy and relevance in the modern period, it is essential that such a grassroots perspective be preserved and promoted. This paper discusses the critical inheritance of the theory and format of 'old' Hainan genealogies so as to construct 'new' Hainan genealogies that retain a strong grassroots position.

The paper first introduces the theory of genealogy compilation by Qiu Jun, a high-ranking official and Neo-Confucian during the Ming dynasty. Qiu Jun's theory was to have a major impact on genealogy compilation in Hainan. According to Qiu Jun, a good genealogy must have the following three qualities or attributes: meticulous and detailed investigation, use of only those materials with good grounds, and clear lines of descent, including the main branch and all sub-branches. Although Qiu was actually serving the feudal system, hoping to bring together members of a lineage under a new family institution through the encouragement of genealogy compilation, his theory can still provide the basis for the grassroots perspective so critical to new genealogies.

Hainan Province has an exceedingly rich tradition in genealogy compilation, and 'old' Hainan genealogies, i.e. genealogies compiled before 1949, have much to offer 'new' genealogies. In general, Hainan genealogies comprise the following sections: an in-

troductory section that traces the origin of the lineage; a main portion that consists of lineage charts which clearly delineate the lines of descent; a section on the lineage ancestral halls, tombs, and lineage land that acts as a supplement to the charts; and finally, the inclusion of family instructions and rules that help to discipline family members and keep the lineage intact. Guided by feudal moral values, the utility of such an arrangement is self-evident.

New genealogies today should build on the theoretical and structural precedents found in Hainan genealogies, but contemporary compilers must also be ready to discard the feudal elements found in both Qiu Jun's theory and old Hainan genealogies. Only then can new genealogies manifest the spirit of both contemporary China and their respective lineages.

Because people are both the subject and object of a genealogy, the above-stated grassroots standpoint is the only logical position that genealogy compilers can adopt. There are three additional qualities that all compilers must aim to achieve. First, they must be able to distinguish facts from fiction; second, they have to emphasise the 'inner directedness' of the genealogy; third, they should perform meticulous empirical research. There is also a recognised need to include a section on the contributions the lineage has made to society. In a word, the purpose of the modern genealogy is to record the history of a given lineage's struggle for social success.

Hokkien Genealogies: The Strengths and Weaknesses of these Materials

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The principal function and value of a genealogy lie in the recording of recognised lines of descent of a lineage for later descendants to trace their own pedigree. This paper, however, seeks to discuss the values of genealogy from a historiographical standpoint. Genealogy has historiographical values unmatched by other primary sources, but it also has certain pitfalls a researcher ought to be aware of. This view is illustrated through examples from Hokkien (Minnan) genealogies.

As a primary source, genealogy can serve as a supplementary text to official histories and local gazettes. It can also be used to collate and correct errors in official histories. However, considering the long history of genealogical writings, it is inevitable that some genealogies or part of a genealogy would be lost because of war, natural disaster, or other calamities, thus resulting in certain unwanted but unavoidable errors. Moreover, in order to flaunt noble pedigree, many lineages like to make fictitious claims of blood ties to famous historical figures, creating unnecessary lineage confusion in the process. There are also instances where errors occur due to unfamiliarity with local geography.

Genealogies are without doubt treasure houses of valuable primary material. Researchers should make full use of them, but at the same time be equally wary of the pitfalls within so as to avoid relaying erroneous information to posterity. Genealogy compilations in the future should make use of other sources to verify the accuracy and credence of the information used. In so doing, future genealogies would become an even more valuable cultural heritage, and be able to better serve society in general, and historical research in particular.

A Perspective on the Compilation of Taiwanese Genealogies

Huang Fu-san

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This paper introduces genealogy compilation activities in Taiwan and their utilisation in research by scholars of various persuasions. Because genealogies deal with affairs of the common people, it is especially useful in the reconstruction of 'grand history'. Historians and anthropologists have long given them a special position in their research.

The history of genealogy compilation in Taiwan is relatively short, in view of the fact that most Chinese migrated to Taiwan only during the Qing dynasty. Hence the number of older genealogical records in Taiwan is actually quite small, and those extant are quite similar in format to the genealogies on the mainland. But after the 1950s, under governmental support and promotion, genealogy compilation became fashionable and many different types of genealogy were published, fully reflecting the strides Taiwan has made in both the education and commercial sectors after the Second World War. By 1985, it is estimated that there are no fewer than 2,333 genealogical records in Taiwan. To date, genealogies have been utilised by historians and anthropologist in their research on the family and lineage histories, or in their writing of regional history or local gazettes.

The second half of the paper critiques the format and content of present genealogies and offers some suggestions for improvement. First, existing genealogies often lack a standardised format, creating wide discrepancies in length and quality. It is not uncommon for lineages to make false claims of noble pedigree, causing confusions in the lines of descent. Moreover, there is the tendency to exaggerate the deeds of lineage ancestors. Some technicalities, like page numbers and chronology, are also outmoded.

Future genealogies should beef up content by first including women, and also adding a section that details lineage history. Important and relevant primary sources should also be included. The author suggests a format for simplifying and standardising genealogies into six to seven chapters. Most important of all, compilers should be objective in their narratives and verify their facts.

Application of Information Technologies in the Compilation of Genealogies

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Genealogy compilers of the twentieth-first century will have to confront two major challenges. The first comes from cultural transitions and new technological advances, the second from cultural diversity. In the near future, compilers would be able to utilise information technology to collaborate with other compilers across the world, via the world-wide web, to create a 'global genealogy', or 'e-genealogy'. The greatest achievement of such an endeavor would be the comprehensive and effective exploitation of global information.

E-genealogy, simply put, is the result of the infusion of information technologies into traditional genealogy compilation. It will play the role of 'information hub' for all relevant genealogies in the world by standardising, categorising and regulating them. Unlike conventional genealogy, e-genealogy would allow its users to gain access to genealogical information any time and any place in the world, via a computer or other modern marvels.

By making the transition from information management to knowledge management, e-genealogy can provide faster and more accurate genealogical information than all traditional genealogies. E-genealogy is the future of genealogy compilation.

Clan-Linked Overseas Business Activities – Case Study of a Chen Family Genealogical Record

Liu Zhiwei

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During the nineteenth century, increasing number of Chinese from Southern China braved the perilous seas to seek new economic opportunities in Nanyang. The fact that they still maintained close contact and intimate relations with their native soil and family in China is often reflected in genealogies. This paper reveals such information found in one genealogy, the *Shajiao chuwangfang chenshi jiapu* (hereafter *Chenshi jiapu*, or Chen Family Genealogical Records), and seeks to evaluate the value of such information from the perspective of Overseas Chinese studies.

Compiled in 1917 and published in 1918, the *Chenshi jiapu* is both a lineage genealogy of Shajiao's Chen clan and the family genealogy of a particular Chuwangfang branch. Sponsored and compiled by descendents of the Chuwangfang branch, this genealogy set aside a section to meticulously record the family history of the branch. From the late nineteenth century to the early twentieth century, many members from this branch began venturing overseas to engage in business or mining activities, reaching as far as Reunion Island in the south Indian Ocean. Especially noteworthy are the numerous mentions of Chen descendants' business affairs in Nanyang.

As reflected in the *Chenshi jiapu*, pioneering Chinese in Nanyang and their hometowns are tied in the following ways: 1) Contrary to popular belief, the closely-knit kinship bonds and ties to native place can sometimes act as a centrifugal force, with the success of fellow kinsmen or villagers in Nanyang often serving as the motivational force for others to follow suit and venture abroad. 2) Kinsmen and fellow townsfolk are usually the source for financial sup-

port, either in the initial stage of raising business fund or when additional revolving funds are necessary. Hometown and kinship ties thus constituted an important component in overseas Chinese's economic relationship. Moreover, such ties also acted as a 'social insurance' for the overseas business endeavours. In return, profits from overseas businesses remitted back to families in China became their biggest source of income. It is not too far-fetched to say that during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, Nanyang was merely the stage on which the business acumen of these overseas venture-businessmen could be employed. Their hometowns in China none the less remained the places where their hearts lay.

For the commoners, the compilation of genealogies represents identification with the cultural norms of the scholar-official. And since sojourning abroad to do business is not desirable scholar-official behaviour, the activities of overseas Chinese usually are not the main focus of a genealogy. This means that serious limitations arise from using traditional genealogies as sources for Overseas Chinese studies. However, because of the popularisation of genealogies, these documents become valuable sources of information on the daily affairs of Everyman, revealing information not available in other historical texts. Moreover, as we have seen, genealogies can help us situate kinship bonds and native place ties within the wider Overseas Chinese business networks.

Genealogies: Critical Historical Data in the Study of Chinese and Hainanese Migration

Zhou Weimin

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This paper treats Hainan genealogies as crucial historical texts in the study of Hainanese emigration. By accumulating the relevant materials in Hainan genealogies, one would be able to reconstruct a panoramic view of Hainanese emigration overseas.

Hainan genealogies have been especially useful in enlightening migration studies in several areas. While official histories can only state general conditions such as political upheavals, economic poverty, natural disasters, or civil wars as forces pushing Chinese overseas, genealogies can provide individual, concrete, and direct information as to why people emigrate – the various manifestations of the search for personal survival and family perpetuity. Information in the genealogies has provided an overall view of the changing fate of Hainanese emigrants over a century, from sojourners to settlers and from lowly labourers to successful notables. Genealogies can also provide abundant evidence on regional demography. Besides detailing each individual's name, age, marital status and time of death, one can catch a glimpse of the periods when outward migrations were at their heights, the size of emigration, and favourite destinations. Changes in family values among migrant families are also reflected in genealogies. On the one hand, after merging into host societies, Chinese migrants began to shed unwanted feudal elements in their Chinese traditions. On the other hand, most Chinese migrants still treasure the sentimental values of retaining Chinese morals. The impressive amount of information on migrants' business and political activities, family and social lives, thoughts and personalities preserved in the biography and epitaph sections of genealogies can help us recreate, in a three-dimensional and multifaceted way, the lives of overseas Chinese migrant societies.