

# 56 Unisex Song Dynasty Mingzi From the Chinese Biographical Database

## Maral of Dragon's Mist

The [Chinese Biographical Database Project](#)<sup>1</sup> (CBDB) is a joint project between Harvard University, Academia Sinica, and Peking University to create a free searchable online database with basically all the pre-20<sup>th</sup> Century individuals in China's historical record. It's an ambitious goal, and so far they've got over 400,000 individuals in the database. About half of those individuals fall into SCA period.

When possible, the CBDB dates individuals to an "index year". This is not the date of the attestation, but rather the best estimate of the individual's death date or 60th year, whichever came first. When the exact birth year is unknown, the CBDB constructs an estimate based on assumptions like generation length or spacing between siblings. In some cases, there is not enough information to even estimate a birth year, but the individual can be dated to a specific dynasty. Since the Song Dynasty spanned from 960 to 1279 (less than 500 years), names on this list without index years are still compatible with all Song Dynasty family names.

The "mingzi" is a modern conflation of two different types of Chinese name elements: the "ming" and the "zi". The difference between "ming" and "zi" is beyond the scope of this paper; for SCA purposes, either one can be combined with a family name to form a full name. The family name comes first, and the "ming"/"zi" comes afterwards. For more information about "ming" and "zi", see ["Introduction To Pre-16th Century Chinese Onomastics" by li Katsumori](#)<sup>2</sup>.

The names on this list are all unisex in the sense that at least one female and at least one male carried these names during the Song Dynasty. They were not necessarily equally prevalent in both genders.

The transliterations are modern Mandarin (mostly Pinyin). This is not necessarily how the names would have been pronounced in period, or in different regions. Although Middle Chinese is a dead language, there are academic reconstructions based on historical rime tables<sup>3</sup>, including transliteration systems that attempt to capture the sound changes. These are beyond the scope of this paper, but I encourage y'all to look into them.

Yes, the name "Fu" is on here twice. It is spelled with different Chinese characters.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://projects.iq.harvard.edu/cbdb/home>

<sup>2</sup> [https://heraldry.sca.org/names/Chinese-Onomastics\\_v1.1.pdf](https://heraldry.sca.org/names/Chinese-Onomastics_v1.1.pdf)

<sup>3</sup> "Rime tables" are period Chinese syllabaries that are organized by multiple phonological features. See [https://www.researchgate.net/publication/290820144\\_What\\_Are\\_Rimes\\_Tables\\_and\\_What\\_Do\\_They\\_Mean](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/290820144_What_Are_Rimes_Tables_and_What_Do_They_Mean) for more information.

Mingzi	Transliteration	Earliest Index Year (within Song Dynasty)	Latest Index Year (within Song Dynasty)	Count
復	Fu	1023	1294	64
蒙	Meng	974	1649	40
琰	Yan	977	1283	35
登	Deng	1030	1286	31
巽	Xun	1004	1290	29
寧	Ning	984	1239	28
遠	Yuan	884	1262	26
桂	Gui	1147	1304	26
莊	Zhuang	958	1208	23
珏	Jue	1079	1300	23
英	Ying	920	1190	22
徽	Hui	930	1226	22
琬	Wan	1035	1184	19
節	Jie	955	1229	18
稷	Ji	1032	1275	18
淑	Shu	1002	1242	18
訓	Xun	960	1223	15
韶	Shao	994	1268	15
希孟	Ximeng	1042	1278	13
晉	Jin	1123	1280	12
則	Ze	1022	1253	11
楚	Chu	1018	1142	9
操	Cao	1117	1165	9
珣	Xiang	1065	1151	8
道寧	Daoning	993	1250	8
靚	Jing	1100	1140	6
文剛	Wengang	1072	1247	4
惠真	Huizhen	1209	1232	4
才卿	Caiqing	1114	1234	4
維清	Weiqing	1213	1245	4
縉	Yun	1075	1127	3
德正	Dezheng	936	1290	3

Mingzi	Transliteration	Earliest Index Year (within Song Dynasty)	Latest Index Year (within Song Dynasty)	Count
希真	Xizhen	1204	1204	3
慧通	Huitong	1169	1169	3
玫	Mei	1133	1217	3
妙慧	Miaohui	1163	1212	2
娥	E			2
嗣真	Sizhen	1068	1117	2
婉儀	Wanyi			2
道冲	Daochong	1227	1227	2
南英	Nanying	1163	1229	2
道堅	Daojian	1174	1174	2
婉	Wan			2
弗	Fu	1065	1166	2
道仙	Daoxian	1087	1148	2
德操	Decao	1074	1151	2
曼卿	Manqing	1215	1283	2
悟本	Wuben	1126	1126	2
惜惜	Xixi			2
致和	Zhihe	1249	1272	2
智通	Zhitong	1124	1124	2
仲美	Zhongmei			2
真淨	Zhenjing	1093	1093	2
法言	Fayan	1172	1172	2
濩	Hu	1122	1122	2
藥	Rui	1173	1173	2