Looking up Chinese or Japanese Names with World Biographical Index

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Do you ever need to look up a historical or contemporary figure quickly while doing research? Try World Biographical Index.

World Biographical Index is arguably the largest international biographical database. In terms of East Asia, it has
over 70 thousand Chinese biographical entries and
over 86 thousand Japanese biographical entries.
Korean names will be added into the database later.

To access World Biographical Index, please go to:
http://resources.library.yale.edu/online/viewrecorddetpublic.asp?whatcaseedit=295
Alternatively, from the Yale University Library home page, go to "Databases and Article Searching", and look for World Biographical Index under "W".

In World Biographical Index, you can simply type a person's name (in romanized form, if this is a Chinese or Japanese) and find that person's brief bio (gender, birth year, occupation, etc.) as well as the citations to the original sources (but without the page number). The brief bio is in English while the original sources are major reference works published in various languages and from different periods.

For example, in the entry for Zhu Yuanzhang (the first Ming emperor of China), the original sources cited in WBI include:

A Chinese biographical dictionary (H. Giles, 1898),
Encyclopaedia Sinica (S. Couling, 1917),
Dictionary of Ming biography (Goodrich and Fang, 1976),
Zhongguo ren ming da ci dian: li shi ren wu juan (1990),
as well as several other sources.

Advanced search options are also available in World Biographical Index.

Hope this helps. If you need more assistance, please feel free to contact Tao Yang at (203) 432-1794 or tao.yang@yale.edu