

The **B**loodline behind the Reunion

The PENG Bank Genealogy I: The Beginning

By SC Pang

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INTRODUCTION

There is a well-known Chinese saying, “All trees have roots and all waters a source.” Likewise all human kinds have origins and to trace or retrace them is basic instinct.

The first ever reunion gathering of the three closely knitted families of Peng (彭), Wang (王) and Ouyoung (歐陽) was held in the Magenta Resort in New South Wales, Australia from the 29th to the 30th of December 2014. One of the main activities was the devotion of three two-hour sessions on presentations given by members on our roots and the life histories of family members, past or present. The emotion and the participation were overwhelming.

To trace our roots is neither simple nor straightforward and involves a lot of patient research but at the end highly rewarding. Unfortunately no matter how hard one tries it can seldom be complete. In our case I have failed miserably in getting even the recent ancestry of my late mother’s bloodline. This is in contrast to my fair success on the paternal side, indisputably the result of centuries of discrimination against women in China. The findings are informative and interesting but far from concrete.

The main objective of the conference in the reunion is not the handing out of past histories but to promote the awareness from, and to raise the interests of, the young generations on our roots, as we imperceptibly become more and more cosmopolitan. It is sincerely hoped that the efforts of the aging members will stimulate a few of our youngsters to tackle this unenviable task and continue with the unfinished work from our first family reunion of 2014.

THE SURNAME

Our surname, 彭, is of course Chinese and can be written in many font types but basically one character. On the other hand, to put it in English, for example, it could have at least three different spellings as follows:

PANG (Cantonese) PENG (Putonghua) PENN (Westernised)

HOW FAR BACK CAN WE TRACE OUR ANCESTRY?

The evolutionary history of any ancient civilisation invariably goes through four stages:

1. Mythical, starting from the creation of heaven and earth;
2. Legendary, from unofficial writings filled with beautiful imaginations;
3. Quasi-reliable, from official but incomplete or unauthenticated records; and
4. Reliable, from properly supervised official record of events.

Relating to the “Middle Kingdom” of China they are:

1. **Mythical era:** 2,760,480 BC to 2,698 BC, from Pangu (盤古) to the birth of Huangdi (黃帝).
2. **Legendary era:** 2,698 BC to 2,208 BC, from the birth of Huangdi to the end of his Dynasty of seven emperors.
3. **Quasi-reliable era:** 2,205 BC to 842 BC, the Xia (夏), Shang (商), and West Zhou (西周) Dynasties.
4. **Reliable era:** From 841 BC onwards, East Zhou (東周) Dynasty and thereafter.

In Chinese mythology, Pangu is not only the first ancestor of all Chinese but also the creator of “Heaven and Middle Earth” and the greatest philanthropist ever known.

It started billions of billion years ago. A huge egg-shaped spacecraft was travelling timelessly in the absolute darkness and dead silence of the universe. Inside the craft sat a giant whose name was Pangu. He held an enormous machete in his hands, hammering and chiselling nonstop on the walls of the egg. After a total of 18,000 years of hard labour his perseverance paid off and in the year 2,760,480 BC he made his last strike. The space egg blasted open into two halves with a **big bang!** The upper half vaporised and continued to ascend to become the Heaven and the lower half continued to grow to become the Earth. Pangu became our very first ancestor. Every day the sky rose up three metres, the ground thickened by three metres and Pangu also grew in size to keep up with them. Nevertheless the Earth remained barren, in total darkness and freezing cold. He did not like this and was worried. He finally decided to sacrifice himself for the good of his descendants.

So Pangu died. His right eye became the Sun and his left eye the moon; his blood turned into rivers and oceans; his body hairs flourished into grass, flowers and trees. His breathings formed the winds and his voice the thunders. His smiles gave people bright sunny days and his sadness, gloomy times. His head became Taishan in the East (東嶽泰山), his trunk, Songshan in the Centre (中嶽嵩山), his left arm, Hengshan in the South (南嶽衡山), his right arm, Hengshan in the North (北嶽恆山), and his feet, Huashan in the West (西嶽華山).

After creating a beautiful world Pangu did not stay to claim any credit and left Heaven to the rule of Yuhuang (玉皇) and the Earth, to human beings.

The Middle Earth was first ruled by demigods with life spans of 15,600 to 18,000 years and known as Tianhuang (天皇), Dihuang (地皇) and Renhuang (人皇), followed by clever people and eventually human beings of all kinds.

The Huangdi Dynasty started at 2,698 BC with its first emperor, Jixuanyuan (姬軒轅), better known as Huangdi. One of his sons, Jizhi (己摯), was the second, followed by the latter's nephew, Jizhuanxu (姬顓頊) who was succeeded again by his nephew and then his grand-nephew. Subsequent to that, the throne was lost to Yiqifangxun (伊祁放勳), better known as Yaodi (堯帝) from another tribe.

Our earliest traceable ancestor, according to old Chinese writings, is Qianheng (錢鏗), alias Pengzu (彭祖). He was the third son of Luzhong (陸終) who was the great great grandson of Jizhuanxu. Hence we may claim to have royal blood directly from Huangdi!

Qianheng was granted the Kingdom of Peng (大彭氏國) by Yaodi between 2,357 and 2,258 BC. The title and the land were inheritable and lasted to the Shang Dynasty (商朝). Since then the Kingdom's name was adopted as the surname of the descendants.

In 1366 BC Wuding (武丁), the Shang Emperor, annexed the Kingdom by force leading to the first dissemination of her people. The spread was random, continuous and in all directions from the original Peng Kingdom in the Xuzhou City of the Jiangsu Province (江蘇徐州市). They could be found as north as Shanxi (山西) and Hebei (河北), as west as Henan (河南), as south as Fujian (福建) and Jiangxi (江西), as north-easterly as Shandong (山東) and as south-westerly as Hubei (湖北) and Hunan (湖南).



There is a long gap of over 1,100 years with no traceable tracks until the middle in the Tang Dynasty (唐朝 618 to 907 AD). During the An-Shi Rebellion (安史之亂 755-763 AD), Peng Gouyun (彭構雲) escaped from Hebei to Yichun (宜春) in the Jiangxi Province. His fifth generation grandson, Yuanshi (袁十), was a District Governor and resided in Luling (廬陵), now known as Jian (吉安). He had abundant descendants, most of them being government officials. They in time also moved southwards to Guangdong (廣東), Fujian (福建) and South-east Asia.

THE PENG BANK GENEALOGY

A detailed account of the genealogy of the Peng clan who lived at the Peng Bank (彭岸坊) in the Shigen Village (石五肯鄉) of the Shunde District (順德縣) in Guangdong was written in 1918. It is named The Hongzhai Genealogy (洪齋房譜). From this we know that the first ancestor came from Luling in Jiangxi. His name was purposely left blank as a Chinese way of respect. He was one of the Emperor's counsellors at the end of the Tang Dynasty. In 905 AD he moved to Nanxiong (南雄) in Northern Guangdong and lived in the Zhuji Lane (珠璣巷) in Shashui Village (沙水村). The reason for the move was not mentioned but could be either to escape from the turmoil of a dying dynasty or due to a demotion by the Emperor for a minor offence.



In 999 AD at the early Song Dynasty (宋朝 960-1279 AD), a local prince consort was drowned in Nanxiong, leading to a mass exodus of the inhabitants for fear of being incriminated. The two great grandsons of the first ancestor, Jiamou (嘉謀) and Jiayou (嘉猷) were among them. They made a raft with bamboo poles and sailed down the northern tributary of the Pearl River. They reached and settled in Guangzhou (廣州)

The younger brother, Jiayou, had four sons named, Guangxin (廣信), Guangzhong (廣仲), Guangzuo (廣佐) and Guangyou (廣佑) respectively in order of their age. Guangzhong found a job in Shigen at the age of 31 years. He chose to reside by a creek to raise his family and the area came to be called the Peng Bank.

For descendants originating from the Peng Bank in Shigen, Guangzhong was the first ancestor. The Hongzai Genealogy listed a total of twenty-one generations up to and including my father, Jiankun (建坤) and uncle, Jianliao (建療) as the last entries. If we extend further on my father's side to the present, we would have twenty-four generations as shown in the following table. The Roman numerals indicate the generation, starting with Guangzhong as I, and the Arabic numbers, the position of the son in the family.

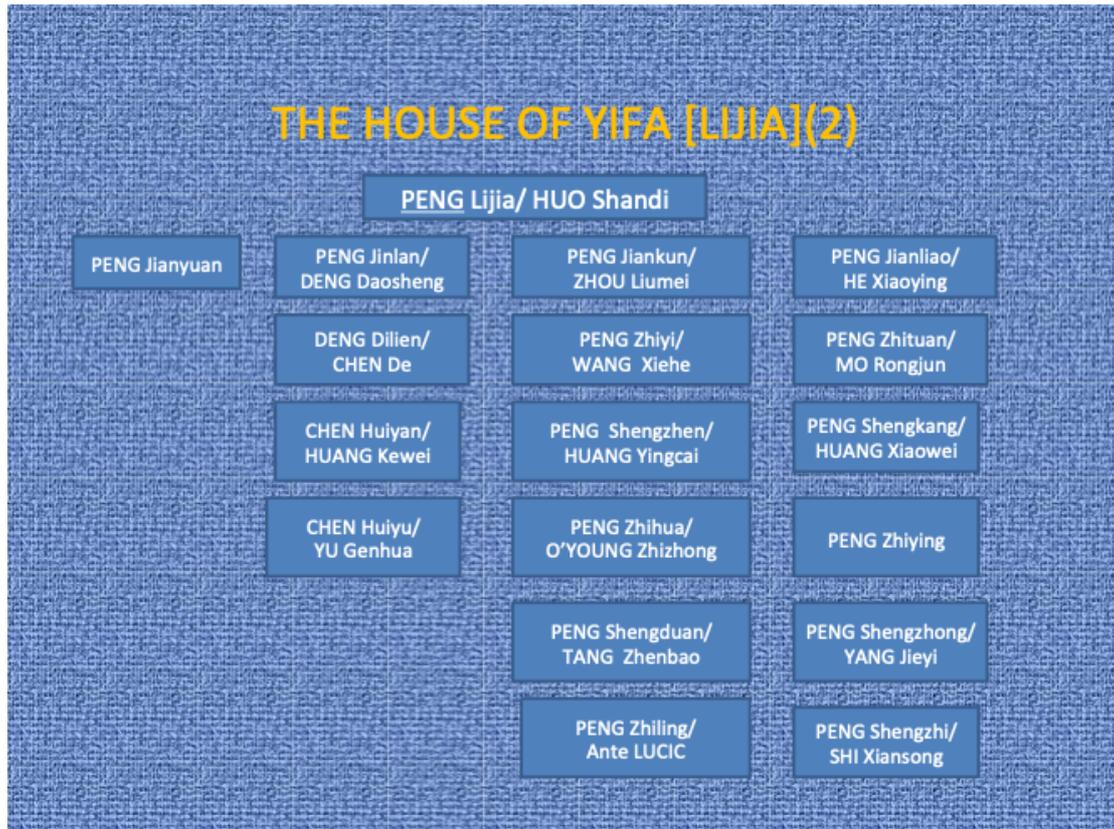
(I, 2) Guangzhong 廣仲	(II, 3) Zhaochang 兆昌	(III, 1) Yuanying 元英
(IV, 2) Zhenshou 真受	(V,*) Shiguang 世廣	(VI, 3) Zuxu 祖敘
(VII, 3^) Shunxiang 順鄉	(VIII, 1) Lien 聯	(IX, 1) Shaoyuan 紹遠
(X, 1) Yingtong 應同	(XI, 1) Dazhi 大治	(XII, 1) Guanbi 觀璧
(XIII, 1) Chengzhi 承志	(XIV, 1) Rugang 汝剛	(XV, 1) Xigao 希誥
(XVI, 3) Zhigao 之高	(XVII, 3) Shejie 社接	(XVIII, 1) Chaomei 潮梅
(XIX, 1) Shaoji 紹濟	(XX, 2) Lijia 理佳	(XXI, 2) Jiankun 建坤
(XXII, 1) Shengzhen 盛臻	(XXIII, 1) Zizhen 子楨	(XXIV, 1) Yixian 亦賢

*Position in the family uncertain.

^Adopted heir by Zuxu who only had three daughters; he was the son of the third daughter.

On the other hand, if we broaden our view to include sons and daughters, an action that is more proper, we can arrive at an up-to-date version. As an example, I have drafted one for the House of Yifa (宜發), the married name of my grandfather, Lijia in both Chinese and English as follows:





CONCLUSIONS

1. Hypothetically: We could claim ourselves to have royal blood, being direct descendants from Huangdi in the Huangdi Dynasty (Legendary era).
2. Realistically: We came from one of a privileged class of generations of government officials from Jian in the Jiangxi Province, possibly Peng Yuanshi.
3. Certainly: We can trace our ancestry to 905 AD at the end of the Tang Dynasty, when he moved from Jian to Nanxiong, Guangzhou and finally the Peng Bank in the Shunde District of the Guangdong Province.
4. The southbound migration continues to Vietnam (not discussed in this reunion), Hong Kong, Australia, Canada and England.

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