

Story of the Szetos

Exerpts from Chapter 1 of "My Father Shafei"

Historical records say: Situ family adopted their surname from the official title. The Situ family was most prosperous in Bianjing, and then migrated to the South China due to wars and chaos. According to the genealogy of Situ family in Chikan township of Kaiping county, Situ Xintang (司徒新唐), the first arrival from Situ family to this land, was born in 1324 and died in 1394. Since Yuan dynasty, the descendants of his and his cognation's have gathered and lived in a dozen townships and scores of villages along the Tanjiang River(潭江) in Kaiping.

This family has an ancient folk legend. In Tang dynasty, Xue Gang, the grandson of Xue Rengui who is a great general, staged a rebellion against the ruler. The emperor ordered a family annihilation punishment. Before he ran for life, a fortuneteller told him to go south with a cockerel on his back and settle down when it crows. When arriving at the Chikan town in Kaiping county of Guangdong province, he heard the cockerel crowing, so he settled there and changed his surname into Situ because of its similar pronunciation with "Sitao", meaning "abscond". Even today, Situ family in Jiaodi Dam (means crow) 濠堤 (叫啼) still worship Xue Rengui as their ancestor, and Hong Kong Situ's Clansmen Association, together with Xue's Clansmen Association, organizes a social gathering between Xue family and Situ family around the world every several years.

In the late Qing dynasty and early Republic of China, Kaiping and Taishan have become famous hometowns of overseas Chinese. Most young men in Situ family bided farewell to their beloved ones—parents, wife and children to seek a living in America and Southeast Asia; women were left alone and pass day by day in loneliness. Now about 30,000 people with the surname Situ live on the mainland of China while those that live in Hong Kong, Macao and Taiwan and abroad also amounts to 30,000.

我的父亲沙飞

史载：司徒族以官职为姓。司徒族盛于汴京，战争离乱，播迁华南。开平赤坎镇司徒家族族谱记载：始迁祖司徒新唐生于1324年，卒于1394年，他和亲族的后裔数十代子孙，由元朝至今聚族而居在开平潭江两岸赤坎镇的十几个乡、几十个村落。

关于这个家族有个古老的民间传说，唐朝薛仁贵的孙子薛刚反唐，要株九族，薛刚逃命前，算命先生说，你背个小公鸡向南跑，它在何处叫啼，你就在何处落户。薛刚南逃到广东开平赤坎镇，鸡叫了，他就落户了，司徒与“私逃”同音，薛刚改姓司徒。直到今天，开平赤坎濠堤（叫啼）洲司徒家族在祭拜祖宗时一定拜薛仁贵，香港司徒氏宗亲会与薛氏宗亲会每隔几年都要组织一次世界薛司徒凤伦联谊会。

清末民初，开平、台山等地成为全国著名侨乡。司徒家族的青壮年男人，大多数告别父母妻儿，到美洲、南洋谋生；女人们守着空房，打发着寂寞的日子。现国内姓司徒的有3万余人，海外及港澳台亦达3万。