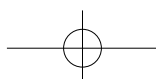
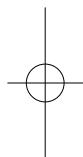
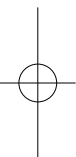
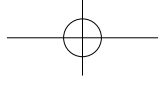


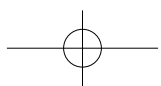
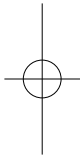
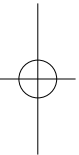
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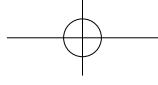
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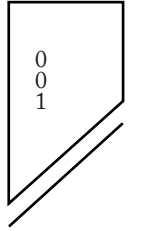


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# I PANGU SEPARATING THE HEAVENS FROM THE EARTH

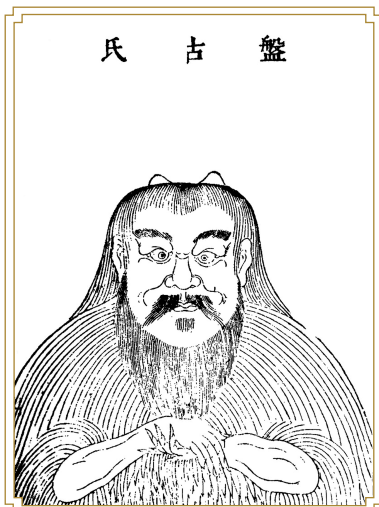


## Introduction

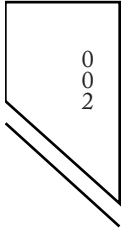
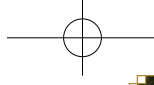
In China's mythology system, Pangu, the creator of the world, is the most ancient god. The story of Pangu had spread far and wide before Xu Zheng, a man of letters of the Wu State in the Three Kingdoms Period, compiled and recorded it.

In 2008, Pangu's myths were inscribed as a national intangible cultural heritage.

I Pangu Separating the Heavens from the Earth



◎ The portrait of Pangu from the ancient book *Illustrations of the Three Powers*, painted during the reign of Emperor Jiajing of the Ming Dynasty



## Story Time

Long long ago, the universe was in formless chaos as the heavens and the earth were not separated. Within the chaos lay a giant called Pangu, who had slept for about eighteen thousand years.

One day, Pangu woke up. Deciding to break the chaotic darkness, he swung his ax. With a big bang, the formless chaos cracked. The light and clear slowly rose, becoming the sky, while the heavy and murky fell, becoming the earth.

To keep them separated, Pangu stood between them with his arms pushing up the sky and his feet standing firmly against the ground. Each day, the sky grew ten feet higher, the earth ten feet

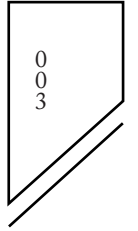
thicker, and Pangu ten feet taller.

After another eighteen thousand years, Pangu grew too tired to support the heavens. The moment he fell down, his breath became wind and clouds; his voice, the thunder; his left eye, the sun; his right eye, the moon; his limbs and body, mountains; his blood, rivers; his muscles, fertile land; his hair, stars; his fur, grass and trees; his teeth and bones, metal and stones; his bone marrow, pearls and jade; his sweat, rain and dew; and the fleas on his fur were carried away by the wind and became people.

Hence, the world came into being.



◉ The Pangu dance imitating Pangu's movements and postures while he was separating the heavens from the earth, depicted in a Han Dynasty brick



## Cultural Links

### ▶ *Classic of Mountains and Seas*

The book *Classic of Mountains and Seas* records the largest number of Chinese myths and is also known as the oldest geographical encyclopedia with great documentation value. The book has a wide range of knowledge on geography, folklore, medicine, history, science, etc. In particular, with the texts of heroic myths and tribal warfare, it reflects the relationship between the physical world and the mythical world.

The authors and the compiling time of the book are still unknown. However, it is generally believed that the book was written by people of the Chu State from the Warring States Period to the middle of the Han Dynasty.

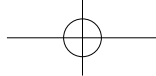
### ▶ Dawang Cliff Painting

The Dawang Cliff Painting, a Neolithic work, is located in Wenshan in Yunnan Province. Containing a great number of elements in Pangu's myths, the painting is regarded as an archeological record of Pangu separating the heavens from the earth.

### ▶ Five major mythology systems of the world

Chinese, Greek, Hindu, Egyptian and Norse mythologies are generally considered to be the five major mythology systems of the world.

Chinese mythology has long been believed to be a factual recording of history. Thus, two versions of the same story are frequently found: the mythicized one and the historicized one.



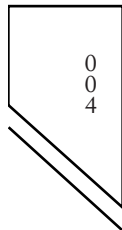
Greek mythology recounts both gods and legendary heroes. Gods are usually human-like but with eternal lives.

Hindu mythology is closely related to the development of its history. In Hindu myths, nothing is permanent and the universe is cyclically created and destroyed.

Egyptian mythology is mainly about a group of nine deities. Most of the gods in the myths are animal-headed with human

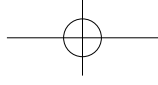
bodies. Probably inspired by the cycle of nature, the ancient Egyptians made recurrence an important theme in their myths. The gods are in the cycle of continual death and regeneration.

Norse mythology is a polytheistic system falling into four types, namely the giants, the gods, the elves and the dwarves. The Norse myths center on the destruction of the world, in which even the gods are mortal.



## Discussion

1. What kind of national spirit do you suppose Pangu embodies?
2. Many hold that reality is exaggerated or distorted in myths. What do you think is the practical significance of myths?



# 壹 盘古开天地

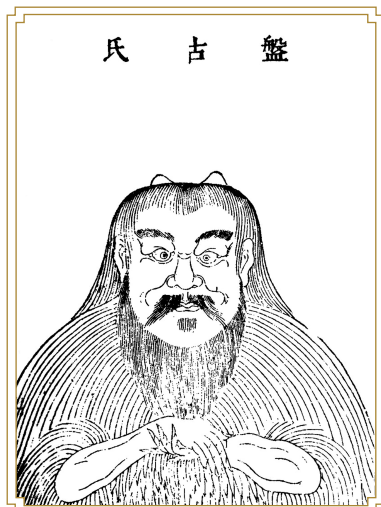
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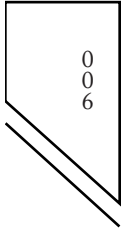
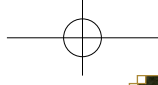
在中国神话体系中，盘古是创世主神，是最古老的神。盘古神话流传已久，直到三国时期才由吴国文人徐整编撰记录下来。

2008年，盘古神话入选国家非物质文化遗产名录。

壹  
盘古开天地



◎ 古籍《三才图会》中的盘古画像  
明朝嘉靖年间绘制



## 故事

很久很久以前，天地还没有分开，宇宙混沌一片。有一个叫盘古的巨人，在这混沌中沉睡了一万八千年。

有一天，盘古醒来了。他决心要打破这片混沌的黑暗，于是抡起了斧头。只听一声巨响，混沌渐渐分开了：轻而清的东西缓缓上升，成为天空；重而浊的慢慢下降，成为大地。

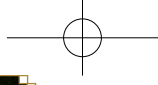
天地分开后，盘古为了不让它们合到一起，就立于天地之间，双手举天，两脚踏地。天空每天升高一丈，大地每

天增厚一丈，盘古每天也长高一丈。

就这样又过去了一万八千年，盘古终究累倒了。倒下去的一刹那，盘古的气息变成了风和云；他的声音变成了隆隆的雷声；左眼化作太阳，右眼化作月亮；四肢和身体成为高山；血液成为江河；肌肉成为沃土；头发成为星辰；毛皮成为草木；牙齿和骨骼成为金石；骨髓成为珠玉；汗珠成为雨露；毛发上的虱虫被风吹散，成为黎民百姓。

世界由此形成。





◉ 模仿盘古开天辟地时动作姿态的“盘古舞”  
绘于汉朝画像砖上

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## 文化链接

### ▶ 《山海经》

《山海经》是记载中国神话最多的一本书，也是最古老的地理百科全书，具有重要的文献价值。

全书内容包括地理、民俗、医药、历史、科学等各种知识，尤其是其中记录英雄神话和部落战争的篇章，反映了现实世界和神话世界的关系。

该书的作者和成书时间不详，但普遍认为是由战国到汉朝中期的楚国人所作。

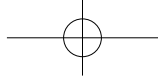
### ▶ 大王岩崖画

大王岩崖画位于云南文山，是新石器时代的作品。岩画中出现了盘古神话的诸多元素，被视作盘古开天辟地的考古证据。

### ▶ 世界五大神话体系

世界五大神话体系包括中国神话、希腊神话、印度神话、埃及神话、北欧神话。

长久以来，中国神话都被认为是历史的某种记载，所以很多故事经常有两个版



本：神话版本和历史版本。

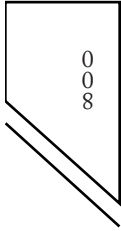
希腊神话主要由神的故事和英雄传说两个部分组成。希腊神话中，神与人相似，但神是永生的。

印度神话与其历史发展密切相关。在印度神话中，一切都不是永恒的，宇宙是不断地循环再生的。

埃及神话体系主讲九位主神，大多数

神是人身动物头。或许受到自然界循环的启发，古埃及人将重现作为神话中非常重要的主题。神明可以不断地死亡和重生。

北欧神话是个多神系统，大致可分为四个体系：巨人、诸神、精灵、侏儒。北欧神话着力于世界的毁灭，就连神也会有死亡的一天。



## 讨论

1. 你认为盘古体现了什么样的民族精神？
2. 很多人认为神话夸张或扭曲了现实，你认为神话存在的现实意义有哪些？