

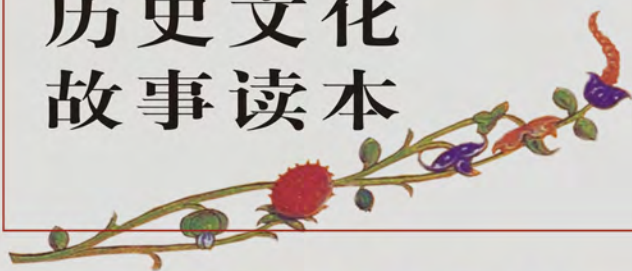
世界经典智慧文丛

THE STORIES OF WESTERN HISTORY AND CULTURE

西方

主编 张勇军

历史文化 故事读本



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西方历史文化故事读本



主 编 张勇军

编 者 金 晶 栾 奕
王盈盈 许 军
欣妍妍



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责任编辑 邹小宁

文字编辑 李凤慧

封面设计 赵志文

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前言 PREFACE

语言是文化的载体,是文化的外在表现形式;文化对语言有着深刻的影响,每一种语言都带有显著的本民族文化的烙印。精通一门语言,势必要对该语言所依托的民族文化有着深刻的了解。习语是语言的精华,是本民族历史文化长期的发展过程中积累和积淀出的最精华的部分,它的真正的意义融化在该民族历史文化之中,是社会历史文化最生动的表现。习语的意义往往借助于该民族的历史文化典故而形成的,具有整体性,不能按字面意义来理解。了解和探寻英语习语的起源,有助于学习者更好地了解该民族的历史文化,从而更精确地理解习语的真正含义。

在长期的英语教学中我们发现东西方文化差异对英语语言学习产生很大影响,许多词语,尤其是习语内含丰富的文化背景知识,简单地从字面上很难正确理解其意义。这些富含文化背景知识的习语给许多人英语学习造成了很大的理解上的困难,因此为英语学习者编写一本以解释英语习语出处的《西方历史文化故事读本》是一件很有意义的事。阅读每一个习语故事,回顾该习语的起源以及所包含丰富的含义,就如同穿越了历史的时空隧道,历临生动的文化画卷,使我们能够身临其境地从对英语民族历史文化的了解中学习语言,更好地理解和应用语言。

本书遴选了英语民族使用频率较高和喜闻乐见的习语,取材内容丰富,涉及英美历史文化的多个领域。按习语出处的内容,本书划分为古希腊罗马神话故事、圣经故事、文学作品、民俗等几个章节。每个章节前有对本部分内容的简介。每则习语故事英汉互译,对生涩的字词、短语或历史人物、历史事件加以注释。每个习语的字面意思都在括号内,而其真正的意思在本书的释义部分做了简明的阐

述。为了便于读者更好地理解 and 正确运用习语,每则习语故事之后都配有例句。此外,书后索引将习语故事按字母顺序排列,并标明页码,便于读者快速查找感兴趣的习语故事。书中有些源于圣经的习语故事,为了保持文体的特色,我们基本保持了原文的风格。此外,对于出自圣经的习语故事的汉译,我们选用了国内流行的译文,除少数影响读者理解之处,一般不做大的改动,以保持与通用的圣经译文相一致。早期的圣经译文尽管与当今通用汉语有差别,但读起来也别有一番风味。本书难易适度,是英语专业学生训练阅读能力、扩大知识面、提高文化修养的读本,也是广大英语爱好者自学进修的好帮手。

这本书集中了许多教师的智慧,其中金晶、栾奕、王盈盈、许军、欣妍妍为本书的出版做了大量资料收集和整理工作。成书的过程,也是我们学习的过程,书中使用了许多已有的研究成果,在此表示感谢。由于时间较紧,更多的是囿于编著者的水平和能力,书中难免存在许多的瑕疵,请读者多提宝贵意见。

目 录

CONTENTS

第一编 古希腊罗马神话

- A Brand from the Burning(一根没有燃烧的木头) / 4
- A Gordian Knot(戈尔迪的结) / 9
- Achilles' Heel(阿喀琉斯的脚踵) / 12
- Amalthea's Horn(阿玛尔特亚的角) / 16
- An Apple of Discord(不和的苹果) / 20
- Ariadne's Thread(阿里阿德涅的线) / 25
- Argus-Eyed(有着阿耳戈斯的眼光) / 29
- Be a Diana(做个狄安娜) / 33
- Be a Jason(做个伊阿宋) / 37
- The Cask of Danaides(达那伊得斯姐妹之桶) / 41
- Castor and Pollux(卡斯托尔和波吕克斯) / 45
- Clean the Augean Stable(s)(打扫奥吉亚斯的牛棚) / 49
- Climb Parnassus(攀登帕尔纳索斯山) / 52
- Cupid's Golden Arrow(丘比特的金箭) / 56
- Cut a Dido(切一个狄多) / 60
- Damon and Pythias(达蒙和皮西阿斯) / 64
- Greek Gift(s)(希腊人的礼物) / 68
- Halcyon Days(海尔赛妮的日子) / 72
- Helen of Troy(特洛伊的海伦) / 76

- Herculean Labor(赫拉克勒斯的任务) / 80
In the Arms of Morpheus(在摩耳甫斯的臂弯中) / 85
Oedipus Complex(奥狄普斯情结) / 89
Pandora's Box(潘多拉的盒子) / 93
Penelope's Web(珀涅罗珀织布) / 97
Rest on One's Laurels(休憩在月桂树枝上) / 101
Sop to Cerberus(给刻尔柏洛斯的面包片) / 105
Sow Dragon's Teeth(播种龙牙) / 108
Sphinx's Riddle(斯芬克斯的谜语) / 112
The Midas Touch(迈达斯的触摸) / 115
The Sword of Damocles(达摩克利斯之剑) / 119
Under the Aegis of(在羊皮盾之下) / 123
Under the Rose(在玫瑰花底下) / 127

第二编 圣经故事

- A Mess of Pottages(一碗红豆汤) / 134
A Judas Kiss(犹大之吻) / 137
A Wolf in Sheep's Clothing(披着羊皮的狼) / 142
As One Man(如同一人) / 146
At the Eleventh Hour(第十一个钟头) / 149
Benjamin's Mess(便雅悯的份额) / 153
Cain's Heresy(该隐的谬论) / 156
Doubting Thomas(多疑的托马斯) / 160
Eye for an Eye(以眼还眼) / 164
Finger on the Wall(墙上的手指) / 168
Forbidden Fruit(禁果) / 172
Go to Jericho(到耶利哥去) / 177
Jacob's Ladder(雅各布的梯子) / 181
Job's Comforter(约伯的安慰者) / 184
Kill the Fatted Calf(宰杀肥牛) / 190
Lot's Wife(罗得的妻子) / 193

Make Bricks Without Straw(制砖不用草)	/ 196
Noah' Ark(诺亚方舟)	/ 199
Not an Iota of(没有一点点,丝毫也不)	/ 203
Separate the Sheep from the Goats(将绵羊与山羊区分开)	/ 206
Spoil the Egyptians(洗劫埃及人)	/ 210
The Apple of One's Eye(眼中的苹果)	/ 214
The Fat of the Land(土地肥美的物产)	/ 217
Wash One's Hands(洗手)	/ 220

第三编 民间文学与习俗

Ask for the Moon(想得到月亮)	/ 228
Bark up the Wrong Tree(朝着错的树吠叫)	/ 231
Cat's Paw(猫的爪子)	/ 234
Cry Wolf(喊狼来了)	/ 238
Eat Crow(吃乌鸦)	/ 242
Have an Axe to Grind(把斧头磨一磨)	/ 245
Kill the Goose That Lays Golden Eggs(杀了下金蛋的鹅)	/ 248
Let the Cat Out of the Bag(把猫从袋子里放出来)	/ 252
Pay the Piper(付钱给吹笛子的人)	/ 256
Real McCoy(真正的麦考伊)	/ 259
The Ass in the Lion's Skin(披着狮皮的驴)	/ 262
The Lion's Share(狮子的份额)	/ 266
Tit for Tat(轻打对轻击)	/ 270

附 录

The Twelve Lord God in Ancient Greek Myth of Rome(古希腊罗马神话中的十二主神)	/ 275
Index(索引)	/ 278

❁ 第一编 ❁

古希腊罗马神话

神

话是人类早期对自然界认识和想象的产物,是人类文明史上最早的口头文学作品。古希腊罗马神话大约产生于公元前 8 世纪之前。它是在希腊原始初民长期口口相传的基础上形成的,后来在荷马的叙事史诗《伊利亚特》和《奥德赛》,以及赫西俄德的《神谱》等著作中记录下来。它包括神的故事和英雄传说两部分。

到了公元前 2 世纪,希腊逐渐走向衰落,而罗马人在地中海一带逐渐取代了希腊人的统治。他们继承希腊优秀的文化传统,开始模仿希腊神话编写自己的神话。古罗马神话基本是古希腊神话的翻版,习惯称希腊罗马神话。希腊罗马神话中神的名称有所不同,为避免读者混淆,本书附录作了简要说明。

古希腊罗马神话是欧洲最早的文学形式,对近代欧洲各国的文化发展有着深远的影响。直到今天,希腊神话仍以其优美的形象和浓郁的诗意长久留存在人们的意识中。英语中大量形象生动、寓意深远的习语源自古希腊罗马神话。如本编中的 Amalthea's Horn 就讲的是宙斯出生时,他的母亲害怕宙斯被其父吞掉,就用一块石头代替了宙斯,而将他藏到克里特岛交给三位女仙抚养。在岛上,母山羊阿玛尔特亚用乳汁哺育宙斯,宙斯在岛上一天天茁壮成长。一天,他和母山羊玩耍时不小心推倒了她,摔断了一支美丽的羊角。为了补偿,也是一种感激,做了主神的宙斯使这只折断的羊角充满魔力,拥有羊角的人可以获得他想要的任何东西。这只角被称为“阿玛尔特亚之角”或称为“丰饶角”,是一种富裕的象征。

希腊罗马神话中的神与人同形同性,既有人的形态,也有人的喜怒哀乐。神与人的区别仅仅在于前者永生,健康长寿;后者生命有限,有生老病死。如本编中的 Castor and Pollux(卡斯托尔和波吕克斯)是一对孪生兄弟,但波吕克斯的父亲是万神之神宙斯,而卡斯托尔的父亲是凡人。在与阿尔戈英雄伊达斯和林克斯的冲突中,卡斯托尔死于非命。卡斯托尔死后,波吕克斯不欲独生于世。他向宙斯请求,希望能够与兄弟卡斯托尔共赴黄泉。宙斯深受感动,于是同意两兄弟轮流在天上和冥界生活。Castor and Pollux 用来表示“深厚的兄弟情义”。

A Brand from the Burning (一根没有燃烧木头)

Meleager^① was a great hero, when he was seven days old, the three Moerae^② appeared. Clotho said that he would be noble and Lachesis said that he would be brave, but Atropus looked at the brand burning on the hearth and declared: "He will live only as long as this brand remains unconsumed."

Meleager's mother Althaea^③, having thus being informed of her child's fate, she took up the brand, put out the fire on it, then she hid it into a chest with care. From this on, Althaea kept this secret. With her care and attention, Meleager grew up healthily, just as the Moerae said, slowly he became a smart and brave young man.

After one harvest, Meleager's father, King of Calydon, while sacrificing the first fruits of the annual crops of the country to all the gods, carelessly he had forgotten only Artemis^④. To punish his negligence, the goddess sent a boar of extraordinary size. With raging flames spurted out of the bloody eyes, hard horsehair erected on the broad back, the boar have sharp buck teeth as huge as elephant's tusk. It recklessly treaded on the fields and swallowed all the grapes and olives even the brands and leaves. To get rid of the nuisance, King assembled the noblest men of Hellas^⑤—today known as the Calydonian hunters—promising to give

① 梅利埃格，阿尔戈诸的英雄。

② 摩伊赖，也称 the fates，指命运三女神。她们分别是：Lachesis 拉基西斯，专司生命之线的长度，人寿尽时，纺线即断。Clotho 克洛索，司纺生命之线。Atropus 阿特洛波斯，专司割断生命之线。

③ 阿塔兰忒，参加卡莱敦狩猎的女猎手。

④ 阿耳特弥斯，月神和狩猎女神。

⑤ 古希腊。

the Boar's skin as a prize to him who should kill the beast . Meleager , with many among those who had been Argonauts^① participated in what became known as the Calydonian Boar Hunt .

Led by Meleager , those hunters went to trace the boar . They came to an old forest winding along the mountain slope . The boar was awakened by the furious bark of the hunt dogs , it fled horribly and dashed numbers of trees . The hunters shouted at it and threw spears and boomerangs to it , but they only hurt its skin , which made it more enraged and untamed . The boar opened the flaring eyes wide and threw itself on the hunters , three of them were trodden to death then and there . Atalanta , a brave huntress , bended her bow , put her arrow , shoot an arrow to the boar's ear . After her , Meleager threw his spear , the first fell down , the second just hit its back . The boar spun irritably , the blood and foam spouted from its mouth . Meleager stabbed its neck with his spear . The other hunters stabbed the boar one after another . The boar struggled in a short while and died in the pool of blood . Meleager stepped on its head , peeled its skin with his sword . He gave the skin and the head together to Atalanta , and said , “Take it ! According to reason it belonged to me , but I am willing to give this honor to you !”

The hunters felt angry about this , they thought she shouldn't have this honor . Meleager's uncles refused to obey , they stood in front of Atalanta , waved their fists , and said , “ Put the spoils down ,you can't take it , it belonged to us !” they grabbed the prey and strode away without looking back . Meleager couldn't stand such a humiliation , he shouted , “You robbers !” He protruded the spear and stabbed one of his uncles . The other uncle was stabbed to death before he could know what had happened .

Meleager's mother Althaea saw her brother's body , she felt painfully sad . When she knew her son was the murderer , she turned sadness to hostility . She remembered the brand that was linked with Meleager's life . She went into the secret room , asked the servant to put up firewood and light the fire . The love of mother and son struggled with the affection of sister and brother in her mind fiercely . She

① 阿尔戈英雄 ,指的是乘坐阿尔戈号跟随伊阿宋去海外觅取金羊毛的英雄。

stretched out her hand for four times to throw the brand into fire , and four times she retracted her hand . Finally , the affection of her brother defeated her love to her son . Eyes closed , she threw the brand into fire with shaking hand .

Meleager was just on his way back to city , suddenly he felt his heart painful as it was burned by fire . He struggled with all his strength , fell down painfully . At last , when the brand was burned into ashes , his pain disappeared , his life was over too . His mother Althaea also died beside the firewood .

梅利埃格是一位英雄,在他出生后的第七天,三位命运女神突然出现了。三女神之一的克洛索说梅利埃格会成为一个高贵的人,另一个女神拉基西斯说他会成为一个勇敢的人,但是第三个女神阿特洛波斯看了看炉子里的那根木柴,预言道:“这根木柴一旦烧尽他就会死去。”

梅利埃格的母亲阿尔泰亚得知了她孩子的命运,她把那根木柴从炉火中抽出,用水浇熄木柴上的火焰,小心地把这根木柴珍藏起来。从此以后,阿尔泰亚一直保守着这个秘密。在她的细心呵护下,梅利埃格健康地成长起来,正如命运女神所言,他慢慢地长成了一位聪明勇敢的年轻人。

一次丰收之后,梅利埃格的父亲卡莱敦王向诸神献祭,可是他因为疏忽大意,单单把女神阿耳特弥斯忘了。为了惩罚卡莱敦王的疏忽,女神派出一头体型巨大的野猪,它血红的眼睛里喷射出熊熊的火焰,它宽阔的背上竖着坚硬的鬃毛,粗大锐利的獠牙如同象牙一般。这头野猪在庄稼地肆意践踏,连枝带叶地把葡萄和橄榄吞吃掉。为了解决这个大麻烦,卡莱敦王集合了全希腊的英雄——今天人们称这些英雄为猎猪勇士。卡莱敦王宣布谁能够杀死野猪,谁就可以得到野猪皮作为奖赏。梅利埃格和许多阿尔戈英雄一起参加了这次著名的卡莱敦大狩猎。

在梅利埃格的带领下,这些猎手们出发去寻找野猪的踪迹。猎人们来到一座沿山坡逶迤而上的古老的森林里,野猪被猎犬的狂吠声惊起,窜了出来,冲断了数不清的树木。猎人们齐声呼喊,朝它投掷矛枪和飞镖,可是这一切只能擦破它的硬皮,使它更加激怒,野性大发。它瞪着冒火的眼睛扑向猎人,三个猎人当场被踩死。勇敢的女猎人阿塔兰忒弯弓搭箭,朝着野猪射去一箭,正中它的耳朵。梅利埃格连投两矛,第一矛落在地上,第二矛正好击中猪背。野猪暴躁地打转,口中喷吐着血沫。梅利埃格赶上去,举起长矛,刺进野猪的脖子。猎人们纷纷举矛刺杀,

野猪挣扎了一下,便倒在血泊之中。梅利埃格一脚踩着它的头,用剑连毛带肉地剥下了猪皮。他把猪皮连同猪头一起送给勇敢的阿塔兰忒,对她说:“收下战利品吧!按理说它应该归我,可是我愿意把这份荣誉送给你!”

猎人们却愤愤不平,认为她不该享受这份荣誉。梅利埃格的几个舅舅更是不服,他们站到阿塔兰忒的面前,挥舞着拳头,说:“放下手中的战利品,你别想得到这份猎物,它是属于我们的!”说着他们一把抢过猎物扬长而去。梅利埃格受不了这样的侮辱,咆哮道:“你们这些强盗!”他挺起长矛就朝他的一个舅舅刺了过去,第二个舅舅还没明白是怎么回事时,梅利埃格的长矛也刺进了他的胸膛。

梅利埃格的母亲阿尔泰亚看到两个兄弟的尸体,非常悲痛,当她听说凶手是自己的儿子时,她的悲哀变成了仇恨,她想起了联系梅利埃格生命的那根木柴,于是她立即走进密室,吩咐仆人架起木柴点起熊熊烈火。阿尔泰亚的内心里母子之爱和手足之情在激烈地冲突着。她四次伸手,要将木柴扔进火中,却又四次把手缩了回来。终于,兄弟的情谊战胜了母爱。她闭上眼睛,用一只颤抖的手将木柴投进熊熊的烈火中。

梅利埃格此时正在回城的途上,突然感到内心有如火烧般的灼痛。他竭力地挣扎着,痛苦地倒在地上。最后,当木柴烧成灰烬时,他的痛苦消失了,他的生命也结束了。他的母亲阿尔泰亚也死在火堆旁。

【释义】

在这个故事中,梅利埃格的生命和一根木柴联系在一起。本来正在燃烧的木柴被阿泰利亚拿了出来,并熄灭了上面的火,好好保存了起来。梅利埃格的生命也因此被保存了起来。人们用“a brand from the burning”来表示濒临灭亡时被救的人,幸免于难的人,也引申为“劫后余生”之意。

【例句】

例一: When I realized I was through that siege, I felt like a brand from the burning.

当我明白我已渡过了那场灾难时,我真有劫后余生之感。

例二: A few brands plucked from the burning would justify our work at Approved School.

少数从罪恶深渊中得救的人,会证明我们在少年罪犯教养院的工作是值得的。

例三: She was a brand from the burning in the earthquake.

在这次地震中她是一位幸存者。

例四：When the tidal wave comes , he happened to go out . Seeing the collapsed house , he said , “I am a brand from the burning .”

当海啸来临时,他碰巧外出了,看着被海水冲垮的房子,他说:“我真是幸免于难啊。”

A Gordian Knot (戈尔迪的结)

In Greek legend, the Gordian knot was the name given to an intricate knot used by Gordius to secure his oxcart.

Long long ago, there was a person named Gordius, who was a poor peasant, which worked day and night. One day, he arrived with his wife in a public square of Phrygia in an oxcart. At that time the King of Phrygia^① died just now. People there asked for oracle of who would be their next king. The oracle had informed the populace that their future king would come riding in a wagon entering into the town in the first place. Seeing Gordius, the people wanted to make him king on the spot according to the oracle. As a matter of fact, Gordius himself was so astonished that he refused to accept the position. However, people were all convinced by the oracle. Finally, Gordius became the king due to everybody's firm conviction. In gratitude, Gordius dedicated his oxcart to Zeus^②, tying it up with a peculiar knot. The oracle foretold that whoever untied the knot would rule all of Asia.

Years passed by, many people tried to undo the knot but all to no avail.

In 333 B.C. Alexander the Great^③ had invaded Asia Minor and arrived in the central mountains at the town of Gordium; he was 23. Undeclared, but without a

① 佛律基亚,小亚细亚中部一古国。

② 宙斯,希腊神话中的众神之神。宙斯坐镇奥林匹斯山,拥有无上的权力和力量,他是正义的引导者,他对人类的统治公正不偏。宙斯既是众神之王也是人类之王,他的象征物是雄鹰、橡树和山峰,其形象经常出现于古希腊的史诗、悲剧等文学作品中。

③ 亚历山大大帝(公元前356年7月20日至公元前323年6月10日),生于马其顿王国首都派拉城,曾师从古希腊著名学者亚里士多德,十八岁随父出征,二十岁继承王位。亚历山大是欧洲历史上最伟大的军事天才,马其顿帝国最富盛名的征服者。他雄才伟略,英勇善战,领军驰骋欧亚非大陆,使得古希腊文明广泛传播,是世界古代史上最著名的军事家和政治家。