

Selected
Tales from
Ancient
Chinese Set
Phrases

故事选

中国古代成语故事选

英汉对照



王天明 编著

XUE YUAN PRESS

学苑出版社

Selected Tales from
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中國古代成語故事選 劉正堃
英漢對照

王天明 编译
司树森 审订

Xue Yuan (Academia) Press

Beijing, 1991

44074/02

中国古代成语故事选（英汉对照）

编 译: 王天明

审 订: 司树森

出版发行: 学苑出版社 邮政编码: 100032

社 址: 北京市西城区成方街 33 号

印 刷: 人民交通出版社印刷厂印刷

经 销: 新华书店北京发行所

开 本: 1 / 32

787 × 960

印 张: 13.5 字数: 240 千字

印 数: 11000 册

版 次: 1991 年 7 月北京第 1 版第 1 次

ISBN 7-5077-0166-2 / G · 96

定 价: 4.00 元

学苑版图书印、装错误可随时退换。

INTRODUCTION

This story book has its distinctive properties quite worth recommending on several accounts:

—— For middle-school students and even higher level ones it serves as a textbook. The anecdotes trace Chinese idioms to their sources making the reading even for English equivalent words and phrases or counterparts easier to identify, comprehend, remember than is possible in other textbooks in common use at schools.

—— The top-priority objective of Chinese students in learning English is no doubt the training of the ability to translate English into Chinese and vice versa. Each of the anecdotes herein contained is written in good Chinese and translated into good English. The Chinese-into-English translator, Mr. Wang Tianming, may not be a returned student from England or America but he has really done a good job in the translation. Translation is a skilful art of reproduction; the degree of difficulty known only to those who practise it, and our translator of the Chinese idiom anecdotes has, I believe, a high command of English, which makes his

work a success.

—— “No context, no text.” All the texts in this book have contexts both familiar and interesting to Chinese students, who are thus helped to know how English words and phrases fit in with Chinese background situations, and in this respect this textbook has rightful claim to be a wise departure from and an improvement on the traditional technic of textbook compiling.

Of course, this book has some other merits than the above-mentioned which, because they are the major ones, in my opinion, should be comprehensive enough to present in a nutshell to its prospective users, teachers and students, what they may probably need for classroom fast reading or self-study.

Xu Mengxiong

April, 1990

中国古代成语故事选(英汉对照)

中文序言

日前司树森同志携王天明同志编译的《中国古代成语故事选》(英汉对照)一稿来访,并出示许孟雄教授为此稿撰写的英文序言,求我再作一汉文序言为副,以收珠联璧合、相辅相成之效。雅意难违,我只好勉为其难,然自知学浅,终不免涉狗尾续貂之嫌。

本书共收古代成语故事一百零二则,其中既有大量禽兽木石对话的寓言 (fables),也有发人深省的比喻 (parables),还有著名的神话、事迹、典故和古文辞的引用,也即英语统称的 classical allusions,真是包罗万象,美不胜收。因此,编译者这里所用的“成语”有其特殊的含义,读者不可一概用英语的 idioms 或 phrases 来看待。

汉、英两种语言的成语都非常丰富,而且有许多不仅在意义上,甚至在形式上也是相似的。例如,汉语有“谋事在人,成事在天”,英语有“Man proposes, but God disposes”;汉语有“人生七十古来稀”,英语有“Threescore and ten is the age of

man”和“Seventy years are all we have”；汉语有“骑虎难下”，英语有“He who rides on a tiger can never dismount”；汉语有“有其父，必有其子”，英语有“Like father, like son”；汉语有“祸不单行”，英语有“Misfortunes never come singly”；汉语有“半斤八两”，英语有“Six of one and half a dozen of the other”；汉语有“宦海浮沉”，英语有“to sink up and down in the political seas”；汉语有“说到曹操，曹操就到”，英语有“Talk of the devil, and he's sure to appear”；汉语有“树倒猢猻散”英语有“Rats desert a sinking ship”或“Tree down, monkeys away”；汉语有“亡羊补牢”，英语有“Lock the stable door after the horse is stolen”；汉语有“鹬蚌相争，渔人得利”，英语有“Two dogs fight for a bone, and a third runs away with it”等等。这种相似既非偶然的巧合，也非相互的借用，而是由于两国人民在长期的生活当中所遇到的一些问题带有普遍性，所以在具体表现这些带有普遍性问题的各自的成语中也必然会有相似性了。同时因为成语常常运用押韵、叶音、头韵、对句等修辞手段以使其形式简洁、便于记忆，因而其通俗性也就大大提高了。如果我们把汉语和英语的成语加以比较研究，我们一定会产生兴趣和有所收获的。

王天明同志编译的《中国古代成语故事选》（英汉对照）一书，不仅有助于广大读者学习英语，而且对外国朋友参照英语译文学习汉语也大有

裨益。我相信此书在促进我国人民与各国人民之间的友好往来和文化交流方面将起到积极的作用。

刘正琰

1990年4月17日于三近书屋

编译者的话

这本《中国古代成语故事选》(英汉对照)一书的问世,凝结着不少英语前辈们的心血,也闪烁着他们热情无私地帮助和培养后来人的崇高精神的光华。

作者开始编译这本书时,就得到了华侨大学教授杨格先生的殷切鼓励和支持,并在由他主编的《外语教学》上连续刊登了部分篇章,这无疑是作者得以完成全书的强大精神支柱。在本书的编译过程中,自始至终都得到了湖南教育学院英籍专家 William Smith 先生的热情帮助和指导。全书完成后,湖南师范大学英语教授赵甄陶先生也曾予以披阅,后来中国人民大学教授许孟雄先生又在百忙中审阅了全书,对部分篇章进行了润色,并亲自用英文作序,肯定了这种尝试。中央民族学院教授刘正琰先生从汉英两种语言的比较方面进行了精辟的阐述并为本书题写书名,使我倍受鼓舞和感激。

本书最后由司树森先生统编、选编词汇表并审订;在出版过程中曾得到吕志士先生的大力支持和帮助;中国科学院出版界前辈邓昂编审也为本书得以问世做了不少工作。对此,作者谨向他们表示最真诚的谢意。此外,在编译本书时,参阅了陈日

朋、金士杰所编著的汉语《成语故事三百篇》的有关篇章，在此一并致谢。

编译者

1990.5

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