

英汉双语对译

# The Stories Behind Chinese Idioms

## 中华成语故事精选

廖达材 编著



安徽教育出版社

*The Stories*

*Behind*

*Chinese Idioms*

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中华成语故事精选

二〇〇七年十月

## 图书在版编目(CIP)数据

中华成语故事精选/廖达材著. —合肥:安徽

教育出版社, 2007. 10

ISBN 7—5336—4603—7

I. 中… II. 廖… III. 英汉双语对译 IV. J0

中国版本图书馆 CIP 数据核字(2007)第 152988 号

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责任编辑:黄书权                      装帧设计:包云鹄 马 芳

出版发行:安徽教育出版社(合肥市跃进路 1 号)

网 址:<http://www.ahep.com.cn>

经 销:新华书店

排 版:安徽飞腾彩色制版有限责任公司

印 刷:安徽新华印刷股份有限公司图书印装分公司

开 本:880×1230 1/32

印 张:6.875

字 数:160 000

版 次:2007 年 10 月第 1 版      2007 年 10 月第 1 次印刷

印 数:2 000

定 价:25.00 元

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## 写在前面

中华成语是我中华民族祖先从事生产、生活和各种斗争长期积累的经验结晶,又在各民族长期使用过程中得到反复锤炼和提升,从而形成一种形式固定,言简意丰,内容深刻的独特文化;而且每条成语后面又联系着一个丰富多彩、妙趣横生的历史故事或神话传说,演示成语产生的背景、出处和用法,可说一条成语就是一段历史的重现。因此,学习成语既是学习我中华民族传统美德的生动教材,也是了解和学习我中华民族文化背景的最佳捷径。

本选集是学习有关中华成语的通俗读物。内容只精选了最精彩、最常用、最富有教育意义的百条成语及其故事;形式则采取英汉双语对译的方式,将每条成语按读音、词义注释、含义(包括本义和喻义)、成语故事、用法等分别加以双语的简明诠释。成语故事是全书的重点,叙事只求达意,提高文字之可读性;对众說纷纭的历史故事,本着尊重民间传说的精神,不予变动;对历史的专用语(如各朝的官制、称谓)和有关诗词的音韵格律,也不作苛求,总之以方便读者的理解和使用为主旨。

本书以学习英语的广大大、中学校学生、学习汉语的外

籍人士,以及从事一般外事活动的工作人员为主要服务对象。期盼能为他们提供一点有关学习英语或汉语、了解和宣扬我中华文化的参考材料。

成语涉及的面很广,笔者的知识有限,语言修养不高,错误之处自属难免,祈读者多多谅解和赐教!

二零零七年十月于湛江师范学院

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# (一)

## 一鸣惊人

【yī míng jīng rén】

### Word notes:

[ míng ]: (bird) sing; call

[ jīng ]: surprise; amaze

### Implication:

(of a person unknown to the public) become famous over-night for achieving a brilliant deed

### Story:

When Qi Wei Wang came to throne, he was under 30 years of age. Being young, he abandoned himself to drinking and paid little attention to state affairs. Taking advantage of his negligence, kings of other states repeatedly attacked his country. Ministers were laden with worry, but none of them dared to offend the King. Later, they called for Chunyu Kun a man homely in appearance but humorous and quick-witted, to speak to the King about the matter.

Chunyu Kun knew beforehand that the King liked to solve puzzles, so he went to the King and said:

"The ministers have a puzzle which none of them can solve. Would Your Majesty like to have a try?"

The King readily jumped at the suggestion and listened intently.

### 注释:

鸣: (指鸟)歌唱; 叫

惊: 惊奇; 震惊

### 释义:

(不为人知的人), 因成就了一项光辉业绩而一举成名。

### 故事:

齐威王即位时, 还未满三十岁, 由于年轻, 他纵酒作乐, 不理国事。其他国家的君王, 利用他对政事的荒疏, 频频侵犯他的国家。大臣们都忧心忡忡, 但无人敢触怒进谏。他们决定推选貌不惊人, 但说话幽默、有急智的淳于髡去向国王劝说此事。

淳于髡事前了解到国王喜欢猜谜。于是他跑去对国王说:

"大臣们有个谜语猜不着, 不知陛下是否也想试猜一下?"

国王很乐意地接受了这一要求, 认真地听着。

"A large bird perched on a tall tree in the palace. He has been there for three long years, neither singing nor flying away. Do you know what the matter was with the bird?"

Immediately, the King knew the puzzle was referring to no other person than himself. He answered:

"I know the bird well. He never flies, but when he does, he soars to the sky; he never sings, but when he does, he amazes the whole world"

Chunyu Kun retired without a word, but waited to see what was going to happen next.

True to his words, the King turned a brand new leaf of life. First, he took back the state affairs of the country in his own hands, and improved his government management. Second, he summoned all his county officers to the palace, and awarded those who were diligent and well-behaved, but punished those who were lazy and corrupt. Finally, he re-organized his troops, trained them into a powerful force, and led them to drive the invading troops out of his country. Frightened by his military force, the former invading kings willingly returned the land they had taken from Qi.

#### Usage:

Ever since then, the idiom has been used figuratively to mean "an obscure person amazes the world with brilliant deeds".

"宫里有棵大树,树上栖息着一只大鸟,它在那里已经住了三年,不飞也不叫,您知道这鸟是怎么回事吗?"

国王立刻就知道这是暗指他本人的。便回答道:

"我知道这鸟。它是不鸣则已,一鸣惊人;不飞则已,一飞冲天的。"

淳于髡听了不再说话,等着看他下一步怎么办。

国王果然说到做到,重新开始一种崭新的生活。首先,他收回政权,改善治理的方法。其次他把全国所有县一级的长官召来宫中,奖励了那些勤勤恳恳,品行端正的好官,处罚了那些尸位素餐、贪赃枉法的恶吏。接着又重整他的军队,把它建成一支强有力的队伍,然后带领他的军队把侵入的外国军队赶出国境。以前那些侵略他的君王,慑于他的军力,纷纷把侵占的疆土退回给了齐国。

#### 用法:

此后,本成语常譬喻地说明一个不引人注目,但因成就了某一光辉业绩而震惊世界的人。

# 一身是胆

## 【yī shēn shì dǎn】

### Word notes:

[yī shēn]: the whole body

[dǎn]: courage

### Implication:

to be dauntless; to know no fear; to be absolutely fearless

### Story:

In 219, Cao Cao led a powerful army from Chang'an (now Xi'an, Shanxi Province) to strive for the possession of Hanzhong which had just been captured by Liu Bei. To meet with the imminent danger, Liu Bei sent two of his famous generals Huang Zhong and Zhao Yun to the west bank of Han Shui to guard the passes over there. Both armies opposed each other on the two sides of the river without hitting out for more than ten days. At the time, Huang Zhong detected that the enemy stored their supplies at the north hill along the east bank, so he led a detached force himself to plunder the supplies, and asked Zhao Yun to follow up as an aid.

By dawn the next day, Huang Zhong stealthily crossed the river with his men and arrived at the north hill. But to his surprise, he found enemy supplies piled bag after bag on the hill, yet the guards fled in a hurry at the sight of their coming, leaving behind the supplies. As an experienced general, Huang Zhong sensed something fishy in the matter, and ordered immediate withdrawal. At the same time, after a spell of drumbeats, two of Cao Cao's generals Zhang He and

### 注释:

一身: 全身

胆: 胆; 胆量

### 释义:

无所畏惧; 无畏; 一点也不害怕

### 故事:

公元 219 年, 为争夺刚为刘备所占的汉中, 曹操率领一支大军从长安(今陕西省西安)南下。为应对这一迫在眉睫的危机, 刘备派出他的两位名将黄忠与赵云, 前往汉水西岸把守那儿的关隘。两军隔水相望, 相持十多天, 谁都没有先出击。这时, 黄忠探知曹军的粮草存放在汉水东岸的北山上, 于是黄忠带领一支人马去劫粮, 并要赵在后接应。

次日黎明, 黄忠带领他的队伍偷偷地渡过汉水, 来到北山。他惊异地发现敌军的粮草一袋一袋地堆积在山下, 但守粮的敌军一见他们到来, 便慌忙弃粮逃跑。作为一名经验丰富的将军, 黄忠觉得事有蹊跷, 下令立即撤军。就在这时, 一阵鼓响, 曹军的两员大将张郃和徐晃分两路从山后杀

Xu Huang rushed out from both sides of the hill. Huang Zhong was compelled to retreat.

Time appointed for meeting was due, but there was no sign of Huang Zhong. Zhao Yun left the job of guarding the headquarters to an assistant, while he himself led some hundred cavalry-men to meet Huang Zhong. No sooner had he arrived at the river bank than he saw Huang Zhong coming along with the enemy at his heels. Zhao Yun plunged himself into the battle and forced the enemy to flee. As Zhang He and Xu Huang soon found out that Zhao Yun had only a few dozens of cavalry-men with him, they hurriedly re-organized their troops and returned. The garison troops meant to close the camp-gate against the enemy, but Zhao Yun stopped them. On the contrary, he ordered to have all the camp-gates opened, all the military flags lowered, and all the archers hidden in the trenches. Mounting on a horse, with spear in hand, he himself planted right at the entrance of the camp-gate. Zhang He and Xu Huang rushed to the front and found Zhao Yun all alone, they thought they must have been falling into an ambush and hesitated. At this time, Zhao Yun with a wave of his hand gave the order to attack. All at once, all the archers discharged, arrows flew over to the enemy like swarms of locusts. The front enemy troops collapsed and the whole army was in confusion. Huang Zhong and Zhao Yun seized the opportunity to pursue and crashed the enemy.

After the battle, Liu Bei inspected the terrain of the battle-field and looked into the fighting conditions. He exclaimed: "Zhao Yun is really dauntless."

了过来，黄忠被迫撤退。

约定会合的时间到了，赵云不见黄忠踪影，便把守营的任务交给他的部将，自己带着百来骑兵前去会合。刚到汉水河边，就见黄忠过来，后面紧跟着敌军。赵云杀入敌军，迫令敌军四散奔逃。张郃和徐晃很快发现赵云只带有数十名骑兵，他们急忙重组军队，追了回来。守营的军队想把营门关上，但赵云不许。相反，他下令把营门全部打开，把旗子都收卷起来，所有的弓箭手都隐藏到战壕里去。他自己则骑马提枪，矗立在营门的入口处。张郃与徐晃冲到阵前，只见赵云一人。他们疑心中了敌人的埋伏，稍有犹疑。这时，赵云把手一挥，下令攻击。顿时，所有的弓箭手一齐放箭，箭如蝗虫一般飞向敌阵。前面的敌军垮了，整个敌军陷入一片混乱。黄忠和赵云乘机追击，把敌军打得大败。

战后，刘备视察了战场的地形，了解了当时的战况。他赞道：“赵云真一身是胆！”

# 一毛不拔

## 【yī máo bù bá】

### Word notes:

[máo]: hair

[bá]: to pull up

### Implication:

(Lit.) unwilling to give up even a hair for the benefits of others

(Fig.) to be very stingy, very selfish

### Story:

Mo Di was a famous ideologist in the Warring States Period and the founder of the Mohist School. He advocated "universal love" and was opposed to war.

Around the same time there was another ideologist named Yang Zhu.

Yang Zhu stood against the concept of "universal love" put forward by Mo Di, on the contrary, he stressed the importance of personal life. He was opposed to the infringement of the rights of others, nor others to infringe that of his own.

Once, Qin Hua-li, a disciple of Mo Di, asked Yang Zhu:

### 注释:

毛: 发; 汗毛

拔: 扯出来

### 释义:

(本义) 不愿为别人的利益而拔去自己的一根头发

(喻义) 十分吝啬, 十分自私

### 故事:

墨翟是战国时期著名的思想家, 墨家学派的创始人。他主张“兼爱”, 反对战争。

大约与他同时, 还有另一位思想家, 名叫杨朱。

杨朱反对墨翟“兼爱”的学说, 强调个人生命的保存。他反对侵犯别人的权利, 也反对别人侵犯自己的权利。

有一次墨翟的一个学生叫禽滑里的问杨朱:



"In case you could benefit the world by pulling a hair from your body, would you do that?"

"But just one hair can't solve the problem of the world," Yang said.

"What if it does?" Qin pressed.

Yang Zhu refused to reply and kept silent.

Meng Zi, a representative of the Confucian School, made comments on the two:

"Yang Zhu advocated the concept of 'self', he would not pull even a hair from his body for the benefit of the world; while Mo Di was in favor of 'universal love', he would like to endure all kinds of hardships for the good of the world."

#### Usage:

The idiom is often metaphorically used to mean being extremely selfish or stingy.

"如果为了全世界的利益要从你身上拔掉一根头发,你乐意吗?"

"但是,一根头发是不能解决全世界的问题啊!"杨朱答道。

"如果能够呢,你又如何?"禽滑里追问。

杨朱沉默不语,拒不作答。

孟子(儒家学派的代表)对两人评论说:

"杨朱主张'自我',即使为了天下人的利益,也不愿拔去身上的一根汗毛;而墨翟主张'兼爱',为了天下人的利益却愿意承受一切艰难困苦。"

#### 用法:

本成语常比喻地用来描述一个人"十分自私或十分吝啬"。