

国学经典·处世三奇书



汉英对照

CHINESE-ENGLISH

THE ROOTS OF  
WISDOM

菜根谭

[明] 洪应明 / 著  
周文标 / 英译  
周文标 应佳鑫 / 译注



百花洲文艺出版社  
BAIHUAZHOU LITERATURE AND ART PRESS

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## 图书在版编目 ( CIP ) 数据

菜根谭：汉英对照 / (明) 洪应明著；周文标英译；周文标，应佳鑫译注。  
-- 南昌：百花洲文艺出版社，2020.9  
ISBN 978-7-5500-3783-0

I. ①菜… II. ①洪… ②周… ③应… III. ①个人-修养-中国-明代②《菜根谭》-译文-汉、英③《菜根谭》-注释-汉、英 IV. ①B825

中国版本图书馆CIP数据核字 (2020) 第132001号

## 菜根谭：汉英对照

CAIGENTAN: HAN-YING DUIZHAO

(明) 洪应明 著 周文标 英译 周文标 应佳鑫 译注

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出版人	章华荣
责任编辑	郝玮刚 蔡央扬 程慧敏
书籍设计	方方
制作	黄敏俊
出版发行	百花洲文艺出版社
社址	南昌市红谷滩新区世贸路898号博能中心A座20楼
邮编	330038
经销	全国新华书店
印刷	江西千叶彩印有限公司
开本	787mm × 1092mm 1/16 印张 16.75
版次	2020年9月第1版第1次印刷
字数	268千字
书号	ISBN 978-7-5500-3783-0
定价	58.00元

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赣版权登字 05-2020-106

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网址 <http://www.bhzw.com>

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## 走向世界的明清小品 ——汉英对照本“处世三奇书”序

The Sketches of the Ming and Qing Dynasties Going Abroad  
— Preface to the “Three Canons of Personal Cultivation”

赵丽宏  
Zhao Lihong

“处世三奇书”是中国古典文学的汉英对照本。在中国传统文化的出版物中，这是一套体例新颖的双语读本。这个读本，不仅向读者展现了中国古典文学一方迷人的天地，也为对中国文化有兴趣的英语读者提供了一个学习的园圃。读者可以由中文而英文，也可以由英文而中文。研习英文的中国读者，学习中文的外国读者，都可以在其中获得阅读的乐趣。

“Three Canons of Personal Cultivation” is a Chinese-English version of Chinese classical literature. In the publications of Chinese traditional culture, this is a set of bilingual readings with new style. It not only shows the charming world of Chinese classics, but also provides a learning garden for English readers who are interested in Chinese culture. Readers can read the canons in two ways, either from Chinese to English or from English to Chinese. Both Chinese readers who are learning English and foreign readers who are learning Chinese are enabled to get the pleasure of reading them.

《菜根谭》《小窗幽记》和《围炉夜话》是明清时期流传下来的三本以修身养性、劝善励志为中心话题的清言体小品集，作者分别是洪应明、陈继儒和王永彬。因其在同类书中出众的地位和影响力，被世人誉为“处世三奇书”，颇受文人墨客和普通百姓的喜爱。

*The Roots of Wisdom, Meditative Notes in Solitude and Fireside Talk at Night* are the three famous books successively appearing in the Ming Dynasty (1368-1644) and the Qing Dynasty (1644-1911), with subjects mainly on moral cultivation and inspirational exhortations on doing good and working hard, and therefore known as the “Three Canons of Personal Cultivation” out of their unparalleled status in books of the same kind and influence among the intellectuals and ordinary people.

华夏文化的发展，每个历史时期都有创造性的文学形态，并在各自领域中登峰造极，成为一个时代的文化标记。明清两朝也不例外，在前后五个多世纪里，小说显然是明清时期的一个主要文化特色，其次就是那些饱蕴着智慧才情、展示着世态风情的辑录和承载着先人学说和思想的格言体小品集了。通过这些作品，我们可以清楚地了解到：优秀的文学家，是中国传统文化的脊梁，他们那些形诸文字的精神与情感结晶是中华文明最有生命力的一部分。世风日下依然能倡导并坚持孝悌，物欲横流依然能淡泊名利，仕途得意依然能心存忧患意识，遭遇不测依然能泰然处之，国家危亡依然能竭尽忠诚，温饱之余依然能不忘劳作之苦，生活清贫依然能寄情山水，凡此种种，都是这些优秀文人留给后世的宝贵精神财富。

In the long history of China, cultural development of each era has its own creative literary form and insurmountable height, thus becoming a cultural mark of the time, the same those of the dynasties of Ming and Qing. During more than five centuries, the novels and fictions are of course the primary literary identity of the dynasties, and the collections brimming with human wits and revealing the ways of the world and the compilations of previous classical works, ancestors' quotes and their developed writings must be the next. Through these works and writings, we see clearly that the excellent literati are really the backbone of Chinese classical culture, and that the crystallization of spirit and emotion they created in words is one of the most vivid parts of Chinese civilization. As the breeders of the civilization of that times, even when the general moves were getting worse and worse they would remain faithful to filial piety and fraternal duty;

even when in an acquisitive time they would remain indifferent to fame and wealth; even when content with their official careers they would remain preoccupied with the misery consciousness; even when coming across unexpected occurrences they would remain unruffled and take them calmly; even when the state was in peril they would remain loyal; even when having enough food and clothing they would remain concerned about the pain of labor; even when living a poor life they would remain disposed to bask in the poetic mood between mountains and rivers. — All these refined qualities are the precious spiritual wealth the excellent literati handed down to us later generations.

“处世三奇书”所收纳的短句小品均为清言体，风格相似，读起来朗朗上口，既有诗歌的韵律又有散文的流畅。这些编辑成集、主题鲜明的短句小品，是被柔美化了的格言，似诗非诗，似文非文，是小品文的一种，形式上是介于箴言警句和散文之间的文体，通常由前后对仗或排比的两句或两段组成，以达到均衡与和谐之美。由清言汇集而成的书籍叫清言集或清言体小品集，有分编和不分编两种，题材自由，体例松散，所收清言小品数量少则近百则、多则数百则不等，每则小品的篇幅少则七八个字，多则逾百。内容涵盖古贤经典和民俗文化，其中尤以演绎儒道释三家之言为多，形式短小精致，文风飘逸清雅，具有“小品中的小品（林语堂语）”的美称。

The short sketches contained in the “Three Canons of Personal Cultivation” are all with distinctive themes, clear-spoken, similar in style, easy to read, and full of the rhythm of poetry and fluency of prose. So far as the form is concerned, these sketches belong to a kind of maxims literarily beautified with a manner of seemingly like but actually not a poem or seemingly

like but actually not a prose, normally composed of two sentences or two paragraphs adorned with antitheses, couplets and other rhetoric devices to achieve the beauty of balance and harmony, and with its writing style lying between maxim and prose. The collections with such writings are called clear-and-upright sketches, usually there being two ways of compilation, classified or non-classified, either freely with subject matter or loose in layout, in which the pieces collected vary from nearly one hundred to several hundreds, and Chinese characters used in different pieces vary from seven or eight to more than a hundred, and the contents arranged cover Chinese classics and folk culture, mostly related to the sayings derived from the theories of Confucianism, Taoism and Buddhism. They are short in length, vivid in format and elegant in expression, and therefore praised by Mr. Lin Yutang (a famous modern Chinese scholar) as “a mini-sketch of sketches”.

“处世三奇书”的可贵之处在于：三位作者皆以其丰富的学养、渊博的知识、明敏的思辨、冷隽的文字、促人深省的儆诫、益人心智的启迪，以及豁达如禅的觉醒，从古贤经典和民俗文化中撷取菁华但又不简单地复述这些原文，而是在赋予它们一定的情景衬托后将其锻造成一个既养眼又养心的段子，于寥寥隽语中将经典所含的意旨优雅地展现在读者面前，充分诠释了中国传统文人的文化底蕴和人文情怀，为世人展现了一幅古人修身养性的清晰图景，让读者在诵读这些金科玉律时多了一份愉悦感和亲近感。

The praiseworthiness of the “Three Canons of Personal Cultivation” is as obvious as this: instead of simply quoting the original sayings, the three authors, by applying their rich learning and cultivation, profound knowledge, dialectical thinking, grave

and stern expressions, thought-provoking warning, meditative enlightenment and self-awareness, turned out their sketches in the least paradoxes to exemplify the extracts from the classical works and folk culture, and gave prominence to the pieces well matched with relevant scene, sight, circumstances, background or landscape, thus achieving the effect of being pleasant to readers' eyes and minds. Their endeavors fully annotate the cultural deposits and humanistic sensibilities of the traditional literati, and thus enable us to have the opportunity to see a clear picture of the personal cultivation of the ancients, and make us feel more pleasure and intimacy than ever in reading the famous aphorisms of ancient classics.

十年前，周文标先生在上海人民出版社出版发行《菜根谭》汉英对照本时，我曾为他写过一篇序。据我所知，十余年来，他一直不懈地致力于用英文翻译和编撰中国传统典籍，并在呈现方式上做了积极的探索。这次他与百花洲文艺出版社共同成套推出“处世三奇书”汉英对照本，足见他这些年在这方面所倾注的时间和精力。周文标先生是上海市作家协会的会员，我为我们作协有这么一位孜孜不倦向世界推广中国传统文化的同仁感到骄傲。衷心祝贺他的“处世三奇书”汉英对照本成功出版，这是明清小品走向世界的一次积极尝试。期待他有更多新著在不久的将来问世。

10 years ago, when Mr. Zhou Wenbiao's *The Roots of Wisdom* in Chinese-English version was about to be published by Shanghai People's Publishing House, I wrote a preface for him. As I know, Mr. Zhou has been unceasingly spending most of his spare time on translating and compiling Chinese classics in English for more than ten years, and has made an active scrutiny into the modes of presentation. This time, he and Baihuazhou Literature and Art Press jointly plan to issue the "Three Canons of Personal Cultivation" in the form of three-in-one packing, which shows how much time and energy he has devoted in this respect. Mr. Zhou is a member of Shanghai Writers Association, and I am proud to have such a colleague who has been working so tirelessly to introduce Chinese traditional culture to the world. Here I'd like to extend my hearty congratulations on his successful publication of the Chinese-English

“Three Canons of Personal Cultivation”, thinking that it is a positive attempt for the sketches of the Ming and Qing Dynasties to go abroad. Furthermore, I’ll look forward to seeing his more new works to be published in the near future.

是为序。

It’s my pleasure to write this preface as above.

2018年7月31日于四步斋

Four-Pace Study in Shanghai

July 31st, 2018

## 《菜根谭》序

Introduction to *The Roots of Wisdom*

赵丽宏

Zhao Lihong

《菜根谭》为明人洪应明所著，是一部内容丰富、充满智慧和哲理的奇书。其形式是格言体，三百余段，每段篇幅简短，语言精湛生动，深入浅出，耐人寻味。作者通晓中国古代哲人的学说和思想，孔孟老庄，儒道佛法，取其精义，归于禅宗。书中的内容，涉及人世万象，劝善，立志，处世，修身，养性，品尝天地间形形色色的美妙景象，可谓无处不达、无所不包。因其睿智的思想、豁达的心境、清新的语境，并描绘出种种令人向往的人生佳境，数百年来流传于民间，不仅被文人赞赏，也被普通百姓喜欢，成为一本广受欢迎的书。所谓“咬得菜根，百事可做”“布衣暖，菜根香，读书滋味长”。这些民间俗语，其实都是对这本书的赞扬。

*The Roots of Wisdom*, written by Hong Yingming in the Ming Dynasty, is a rare book which contains abundant perspectives, wisdom and philosophy. With its literary form embodied in maxim, the book is composed of more than three hundred short writings, from which there can be seen striking expressions, simply-explained profoundness and thought-provoking substances. By reading the book, we will be strongly impressed by the author's rich accumulation of the theories of the ancient sages in Chinese history, his knowledge ranging from the thoughts of Confucius, Mencius, Lao Zi and Zhuang Zi to the relevant doctrines involved in Confucianism, Taoism, Buddhism and Legalism, as well as his successful exploits in extracting the essences therein and putting them into meditation in the way of Chan. So what he presented in his book are mostly related to the substantial issues regarding myriad affairs of the human world, exhortations on people's doing good and enlightenment for them on how to determine their will, regulate their conduct, cultivate their inner power and refine their personal dispositions. In addition, the book also unfolds before

our eyes a big variety of subtle views existing between the heaven and earth. It can be said that it stops at nothing and nothing is left out. It is because of the fantastic features manifested in its context such as intelligent ideology, broad-mindedness, fresh extent of wording and phrasing and enormous desirable braveries of life that the book, during the hundreds of years of circulation, has been not only appreciated by men of letters but also cherished by the common people, thereby coming out as a rare book universally welcomed. As a matter of fact, the proverbs like “One who can endure chewing vegetable root will find nothing is difficult.” and “Course clothes give warmth and vegetable roots fragrance, while indulgence in study brings about lifelong benefit.” are all considered to be the plaudits for the book.

对本奇书，历来有不少解读，原著的文字，衍生出很多后人心得，古老的文字，历久弥新，被不同时代的读者读出新的意味。此书的影响，不仅在国内，也流传到了国外，日本、韩国、东南亚，都有《菜根谭》引发的回声。现在，这本中英文对照的《菜根谭》即将出版，我想，这对学习英文的中国读者是一件幸事，对正在学习中文、对中国文化有兴趣的英文读者，更是一件意义非凡的事情。

There have been many different annotations and interpretations on the words and expressions contained in this rare book since its appearance. The dictions used in it have been evolved into numerous understandings all through the ages. The implied meanings of the vocabulary have been renewed from time to time and yet remain new to the readers of the coming generations. Its influence has flowed widely not merely within China but also without, wherefrom its echoes have been now and then sounding from Japan, South Korea and Southeast Asia. Now *The Roots of Wisdom* in the version of Chinese-English is about to be published soon. I would like to take this chance to say that the publication of the translation is a piece of good news to Chinese readers who are now engaged in English learning and also an event even more significant to those English-speaking people who are interested in Chinese culture.

本书的译者周文标先生，很多年前曾领衔将篇幅浩瀚的英文版《世界名言博引词典》（伯顿·史蒂文森主编）翻译成中文，并以一己之力根据中文习惯重新编列分辑，成为翻译出版界的一个壮举。这次，周文标选择将《菜根谭》转译成英文，有眼光，也有勇气。把这样一本古书翻译成英文，对一个中国人来说，绝非易事，除了精通英文，还必须对博大精深的中国传统文化有深入准确的理解。将数百年前的涵义幽深的中国古语转换成异国文字，会遇到多少障碍，可以想象，但是周文标没有被难倒。呈现在读者眼前的这本汉英对照《菜根谭》，是周文标先生多年心血的结晶。我相信，在阅读此书时，读者会对这位为中国文化搭建沟通桥梁的翻译家产生由衷的敬意。

Many years ago, Mr. Zhou Wenbiao, the translator of *The Roots of Wisdom*, lead an English-to-Chinese translation of *The Home Book of Quotations* (compiled by Burton Stevenson) and recompiled it single-handedly in accordance with Chinese phonetic alphabet, and thus created a remarkable precedent for the dictionaries of this kind in China. This time Mr. Zhou takes *The Roots of Wisdom* as his new rendering which manifests again the sense of his exertion and confidence. For having such an ancient book translated from Chinese into English is no easy matter for an unadulterated Chinese. To do it well there must come into play a good command of English language and a deep, precise understanding of Chinese traditional culture as well. So it can be imagined that Mr. Zhou must have encountered many difficulties in his rendering into English those old Chinese with profound meanings of several centuries prior. Be that as it was, he was not baffled and what he contemplated three years ago has now come true in the very publication he presents to us. No wonder when readers have the book in their hands there would surely well up in

their hearts the appreciation for the translator who has done his part in putting up a bridge to connect Chinese and English cultures.

是为序。

It's my pleasure to write this preface for the book as above.

2008年6月12日于上海四步斋

Four-Pace Study in Shanghai

June 12th, 2008

译者按：

以上是上海市作家协会副主席赵丽宏先生2008年6月为本人的《菜根谭》汉英对照单行本所赐的《序》，此次百花洲文艺出版社出版合装“处世三奇书”汉英对照本，仍沿用作《菜根谭》的序，谨以此再次表示本人对赵丽宏先生的感谢和敬意。

Translator's Note:

Above is the preface written by Mr. Zhao Lihong, vice president of Shanghai Writers Association, in June 2008. It's my honor to have his preface reused as the introduction to *The Roots of Wisdom* in the publication of Chinese-English version of “Three Canons of Personal Cultivation” issued by Baihuazhou Literature and Art Press, and hereby to express again my heartfelt gratitude and respect to him.

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37. It is better to leave both righteousness and untainted name to the world.

38. 降魔先降心 驭横先驭气 /024

38. To vanquish monsters, first vanquish the wicked thoughts in mind; to control absurdity, first control the internal rashness in heart.

39. 教育子弟 要严交游 /024

39. To educate disciples, it is better to do so by setting rigid rules on their social intercourse.

40. 欲路勿染 理路勿退 /025

40. Do not act willfully in pursuing material gains, nor shrink back in seeking the truth.

41. 不可浓艳 不可枯寂 /025

41. In everyday life, one should be neither too particular nor too casual-minded.

42. 超越天地 不入名利 /026

42. Transcend the mundane world by not being tempted into fame and wealth.

43. 高一步立身 退一步处世 /027

43. Stand on a higher plane in pursuit and for the sake of security, learn how to compromise.

44. 修德忘名 读书深心 /027

44. Do away with fame when striving for virtue and be wholly devoted when resolving upon study.

45. 一念之差 失之千里 /028

45. A momentary slip gives occasion to a permanent loss.

46. 有木石心 具云水趣 /029

46. A rock-firm will is indispensable in moral cultivation, so is a natural temperament in dedication to the country.

47. 吉人和气 凶人杀气 /030

47. A good man is always imbued with composure, and a bad man with a murderous look.

48. 君子无祸 勿罪冥冥 /030

48. An accomplished man should do no evil on the sly if he wants to distance calamities.

49. 多心为祸 少事为福 /031

49. It is a misfortune to be sunk in excessive exertions, but a fortune to have few cares.

50. 当方则方 当圆则圆 /032

50. Be upright whenever needed and slick, when it is necessary.

51. 己功不念 人恩不忘 /032

51. Bear not in mind the favors we have done to others but the bounties

others might have bestowed on us.

52. 施之不求 求之无功 /033

52. Never seek return for the benefaction we have given, otherwise winning no reputation.

53. 相观对治 方便法门 /034

53. It is good for one to take mutual examination and contrast others' position with one's own.

54. 心地干净 方可学古 /034

54. Only when the heart is made clear and pure can one start to model after ancient sages and men of virtue.

55. 崇俭养廉 守拙全真 /035

55. Frugality makes honesty and dullness brings sincerity.

56. 学以致用 立业种德 /036

56. Studying for the purpose of application conduces to both moral cultivation and career development.

57. 扫除外物 直觅本来 /037

57. Only by clearing away outside enticement can one find a straight path to the essence of his nature.

58. 苦中有乐 得意生悲 /037

58. As pleasure grows in suffering, so frustration forms in contentment.

59. 富贵名誉 来自道德 /038

59. Riches and honor should be derived from the cultivation of morality.

60. 花铺好色 人行好事 /038

60. As flowers would bloom a riot of color, so should one do good turns so long as one lives.

61. 兢业的心思 潇洒的趣味 /039

61. Unrestrained interest for life is as vital as assiduous thoughts in

learning.

62. 立名者贪 用术者拙 /040

62. Those who seek reputation are greedy and clumsy, those who resort to craft.

63. 宁虚勿溢 宁缺勿全 /040

63. Emptiness is better than spillage, and so is incompleteness than completion.

64. 拔去名根 融化客气 /041

64. Uproot the lust for fame within and dispose of influences without.

65. 心体光明 暗室青天 /042

65. An open, aboveboard mind makes a dark room bright.

66. 无名无位 无忧无虑 /042

66. Without fame and rank one will be free from worldly cares.

67. 阴恶恶大 显善善小 /043

67. Vice concealed is more harmful than that revealed, but benevolence known by all inferior to that known to none.

68. 居安思危 天亦无用 /043

68. Get prepared for danger in times of peace, and Providence can do nothing against you.

69. 偏激之人 难建功业 /044

69. Those who are liable to go to extremes can hardly make any contributions.

70. 愉快求福 去怨避祸 /045

70. Keep a happy mood so as to seek good fortune and to avoid disasters, discard grudge and hatred.