

一、引 言

《圣经》创世纪(Genesis)在讲到上帝造物时有这样一段描述：

In the beginning, when God created the universe, the earth was formless and desolate. The raging ocean that covered everything was engulfed in total darkness, and the power of God was moving over the water. Then God commanded, "Let there be light" — and light appeared. God was pleased with what he saw. Then he separated the light from the darkness, and he named the light "Day" and the darkness "Night". Everything passed and morning came — that was the first day.

Then God commanded, "Let there be dome to divide the water and to keep it in two separate places" — and it was done. So God made a dome, and it separated the water under it from the water above it. He named the dome "Sky". Everything passed and morning came — that was the second day.

Then God commanded, "Let the water below the sky come together in one place, so that the land will appear" — and it was done. He named the land "Earth", and the water "Sea" ... Then he commanded, "Let the earth produce all kinds of plants, those that bear grain and those that bear fruit" ... Everything passed and morning came — that was the third day.

Then God commanded, "Let lights appear in the sky to separate day from night and to show the time when days, years, and religious festivals begin; they will shine in the sky to give light to the earth" —

and it was done. So God made the two larger lights, the sun to rule over the day and the moon to rule over the night; he also made the stars... Everything passed and morning came — that was the fourth day.

Then God commanded, “Let the water be filled with many kinds of living beings, and let the air be filled with birds.” So God created the great sea monsters, all kinds of creatures that live in the water, and all kinds of birds. And God was pleased with what he saw... Everything passed and morning came — that was the fifth day.

Then God commanded, “Let the earth produce all kinds of animal life: domestic and wild, large and small” — and it was done.

Then God said, “And now we will make human beings; they will be like us and resemble us. They will have power over the fish, the birds, and all animals, domestic and wild, large and small.” So God created human beings, making them to be like himself. He created them male and female, blessed them... God looked at everything he had made, and he was very pleased. Everything passed and morning came — that was the sixth day.

这段话的大意是：宇宙初始，一片混沌，于是上帝下令造了光明，使明、暗昭然，遂成昼、夜，这是第一天。第二天，上帝造了苍穹，使天、水分离。第三天，上帝造了陆地和海洋，并使地上长植物、树上结果子。第四天，上帝造了太阳、月亮和星星，使万物生辉。第五天，上帝造了空中的鸟和水中的鱼。第六天，上帝造了地上各种动物，然后又照自己的形象造了  让他统管水中的鱼、空中的鸟以及地上各种动物。

此话虽是‘异端邪说’，但却道出了一个不可否认的事实：地球上先有动物后有人类。科学研究表明，人类在地球上生存的历史仅二百万年，而早在七亿五千多万年前，地球上就已经出现了蠕虫类、甲壳类等动物。由于地壳和气候的巨大变化，一切动植物绝灭了，一些

动植物进化了。“万物之灵”的人就是在这种漫长的过程中由动物进化而来的,而且大大地超出了动物界,成为“能从事生产的动物”(the animal that produces)。

尽管人类超脱了动物界,但与动物一直有着十分密切的关系。人类的衣、食、住、行、劳作都离不开动物。在太古时期,人类的主要生产方式是狩猎。这样,动物便成了人们的衣食之源。在长期的生产活动和生活实践中,人们逐渐地发现动物的可驯性和可用性,于是利用它来为人类服务。据说早在一万年以前的石器时代,狗(dog)就已经是人的得力助手了。在以后的漫长岁月里,人们学会了用马(horse)拉车,用牛(ox)耕地,用猫(cat)捕鼠,用蜂(bee)酿蜜,用驴(donkey)驮运,用鸡(cock)司晨。

除了这种到处可见的直接关系,可以说,在人类生活的各个领域——无论在政治、军事或商贸、文体等——人们常常可以看到动物的形象,可以听到动物的名称。美国国徽上的鹰(eagle),英国国徽上的狮(lion),美国的小鹰号(Kitty Hawk)航空母舰,俄罗斯的替罪羊(scapegoat)导弹,美国的骆驼牌(camel)香烟,中国的斑马牌(zebra)蚊香,美国职业篮球队中的公牛队(Bulls)、雄鹿队(Stags),风靡一时的动画片 *Mickey Mouse and Donald Duck* (米老鼠和唐老鸭),以及 1998 年 12 月 22 日美国对伊拉克实行空中打击的代号“Desert Fox (沙漠之狐)”,凡此种种,不胜枚举。

人们还以动物为题材创作了许多优秀的作品:美国作家 Dreiser (德莱塞)的小说 *Octopus* (《章鱼》),英国诗人 Keats (济慈)的抒情诗 *The Grasshopper and the Cricket* (《蚱蜢和蟋蟀》),商务印书馆出版的 *Grimm's Fairy Tales* (《格林童话》),L.S.Hyde 所著的 *The Ten Famous Greek Stories* (《希腊神话十篇》),以及 Aesop 的 *Aesop's Fables* (《伊索寓言》),等等。

近三十年来发展起来的仿生学,就是技术科学与生物(动物和植物)科学相结合的一门具有广阔发展前景的边缘学科。著名田径教

练马俊仁先生通过仔细观察鹿（deer）在奔跑时双腿的敏捷运动以及鸵鸟（ostrich）在奔走时两翼的协调配合，运用仿生学原理，摸索出一套训练长跑运动员的神功妙法，使马家军在奥运会上一举成名，跃入世界冠军之列。

可以相信，联系动物的形象、特征、动物习语、动物典故等来学习、研究英语，必能收到事半功倍之效果。

二、动物的象征意义

象征，是用一种事物表示另一种事物，或者用具体的东西表现事物的某种意义；它通过某一特定的具体形象来表示与之相似或相近的概念、思想或感情。自古以来，人们借助于自己所熟悉的具体事物——符号、颜色、植物、动物等来象征某种意义。不同的社会、不同的国家、不同的民族、不同的时代，用不同的事物象征不同的意义。动物由于与人关系密切，常被用来作为某种意义的象征。例如：

The ant symbolizes frugality and prevision.

蚂蚁象征着节俭和有先见之明。

The ape symbolizes uncleanness, malice and lust.

猿象征邪恶、恶意和贪欲。

The ass symbolizes stupidity. 驴子象征愚蠢。

The bantam cock symbolizes pluckiness and priggishness.

矮脚鸡象征胆大、自负。

The bat symbolizes blindness. 蝙蝠是盲的象征。

The bear symbolizes ill-temper and uncouthness.

熊是脾气暴躁、粗野的象征。

The bee symbolizes industry. 蜜蜂是勤劳的象征。

The beetle symbolizes blindness. 甲虫是盲的象征。

The bull symbolizes strength and straight forwardness.

公牛是力量和爽直的象征。

The bulldog symbolizes pertinacity.

牛头犬是坚韧不拔的象征。

(也常象征英国人。)

The butterfly symbolizes sportiveness. 蝴蝶象征欢快。

The calf symbolizes cowardice and lumpishness.

小牛犊象征懦弱和迟钝。

The camel symbolizes submission. 骆驼象征顺服。

The cat symbolizes deceit. 猫是欺诈的象征。

The cicada symbolizes poetry. 蝉是诗歌的象征。

The cock symbolizes vigilance and overbearing insolence.

公鸡既是警醒的象征,又是傲慢、蛮横的象征。

The cow symbolizes longevity. 母牛是长寿的象征。

The crocodile symbolizes hypocrisy. 鳄鱼是虚伪的象征。

The cuckoo symbolizes cuckoldom.

杜鹃是丈夫戴绿帽子的象征。

The dog symbolizes fidelity and dirty habit.

狗是忠诚的象征,又是肮脏习惯的象征。

The dove symbolizes innocence and harmlessness.

鸽子是天真无邪的象征,还是和平(peace)的象征。

The dragon symbolizes Satan and his crew.

龙象征恶魔及其门徒。

(在中世纪,龙是罪恶(sin)的象征。而在古代中国,龙是皇帝(emperor)的象征。)

The duck symbolizes deceit and hoax. 鸭子是哄骗的象征。

The eagle symbolizes majesty and inspiration.

鹰是权威的象征,也是灵感的象征。

The elephant symbolizes sagacity and ponderosity.

大象既象征贤明,也象征笨重。

(在佛教中,象是大慈大悲的象征。)

The fly symbolizes feebleness and insignificance.

苍蝇象征弱小,也象征无关紧要。

The fox symbolizes cunning and artifice.

狐狸象征狡猾和计谋。

The frog and the toad are symbols of inspiration.

青蛙和癞蛤蟆是灵感的象征。

The goat symbolizes lasciviousness.

山羊象征淫乱好色。

The goose symbolizes conceit and folly.

鹅象征自负、愚蠢。

The grasshopper symbolizes old age.

蚱蜢是老年的象征。

The gull symbolizes gullibility.

鸥是受骗的象征。

The hare symbolizes timidity.

兔子是胆小的象征。

The hawk symbolizes rapacity and penetration.

秃鹰象征掠夺和有洞察力。

The hen symbolizes maternal care.

母鸡象征母爱。

The hog symbolizes impurity.

猪象征淫秽。

The horse symbolizes speed and grace.

马是速度和优美的象征。

The jackdaw symbolizes vain assumption and empty conceit.

穴鸟是虚荣自负的象征。

The jay symbolizes senseless chatter.

桤鸟是胡说八道的象征。

The kitten symbolizes playfulness.

小猫象征嬉戏。

The lamb symbolizes innocence and sacrifice.

羔羊象征天真无辜和献身。

The lark symbolizes cheerfulness.

百灵鸟象征欢乐。

The leopard symbolizes sin.

豹子象征罪恶。

The lion symbolizes noble courage.

狮子象征勇敢。

The lynx symbolizes suspicious vigilance.

山猫是狐疑的象征。

The magpie symbolizes garrulity.

喜鹊是多嘴的象征。

The mole symbolizes blindness and obtuseness.

鼹鼠是盲瞎、迟钝的象征。

- The monkey symbolizes tricks. 猴子象征诡计、妙诀。
- The mule symbolizes obstinacy. 骡子象征顽固不化。
- The nightingale symbolizes forlornness. 夜莺象征孤零。
- The ostrich symbolizes stupidity. 鸵鸟象征愚蠢。
- The owl symbolizes wisdom. 猫头鹰象征智慧。
- The ox symbolizes patience, industry, strength and pride.
公牛是耐力、勤勉、力量和自尊的象征。
- The parrot symbolizes mocking verbosity.
鹦鹉是喋喋不休的象征。
- The peacock symbolizes pride. 孔雀是骄傲自负的象征。
- The pelican symbolizes Christ. 鹈鹕是耶稣基督的象征。
- The pig symbolizes obstinacy, dirtiness and gluttony.
猪是固执、肮脏、贪食的象征。
- The pigeon symbolizes cowardice. 鸽子是胆怯的象征。
- The puppy symbolizes conceit. 小狗是自负的象征。
- The rabbit symbolizes fecundity. 兔子是多产的象征。
- The raven symbolizes ill-luck. 乌鸦是不吉祥的象征。
- The robin redbreast symbolizes confiding trust.
知更鸟是值得信任的象征。
- The serpent symbolizes wisdom. 毒蛇是智慧的象征。
- The sheep symbolizes silliness and timidity.
绵羊既是天真纯朴的象征，也是胆小的象征。
- The sparrow symbolizes lasciviousness. 麻雀是猥亵的象征。
- The spider symbolizes wiliness. 蜘蛛是狡诈多谋的象征。
- The stag symbolizes cuckoldom.
雄鹿是(丈夫)戴绿帽子的象征。
- The swan symbolizes grace. 天鹅是姿态优美的象征。
- The swine symbolizes Satan and his crew.

猪猡是恶魔及其门徒的象征。

The tiger symbolizes ferocity.

老虎是凶残的象征。

(在中国，老虎则是保护者和交好运的象征。——a protector and symbol of good luck。)

The tortoise symbolizes chastity. 乌龟是贞节的象征。

The turkey cock symbolizes official insolence.

雄鸡是官僚傲慢作风的象征。

The turtle-dove symbolizes conjugal fidelity.

斑鸠是夫妻忠贞的象征。

The vulture symbolizes rapine. 兀鹰是掠夺的象征。

The wolf symbolizes cruelty. 狼是残忍的象征。

The worm symbolizes cringing.

蠕虫是卑躬屈膝、阿谀奉承的象征。

三、动物与语言

语言是一种社会现象。它是人类所特有的，是人类区别于动物的一个重要标志。对于语言，世间有许多神奇的传说。在古印度，婆罗门教徒把语言看做神。一部公元前 1500 年用梵文写成的《吠陀》(veda)称语言是母牛(cow)，呼吸是公牛(bull)，由语言和呼吸而产生了人心。因此在婆罗门教徒眼中，牛是神的象征。此话虽然神乎得离奇，但动物之于语言确有不可磨灭之“功勋”。

千百年来，人类在猎捕动物、驯化动物和饲养动物的过程中，认识并掌握了各种动物的形态结构、生活习惯、生理特点等等。如：驴子(ass)愚蠢迟钝，猴子(monkey)聪明灵活，绵羊(sheep)顺服温柔，骡子(mule)秉性顽固，蜜蜂(bee)勤劳繁忙，母猪(sow)贪吃懒动，兔子(rabbit)胆小怕死，狮(lion)、虎(tiger)勇猛凶残，鸽子(dove)性情温和，熊(bear)粗鲁暴躁，蛇(snake)、狼(wolf)阴险狠毒，狐狸(fox)老奸巨猾，蜗牛(snail)行动迟缓，百灵(lark)欢乐活泼，孔雀(peacock)虽然天赐艳装，但却高傲自负。

在语言实践中，人们常借助于动物的这些特点，或借助于具有这些特点的动物来喻人喻事。例如用孔雀(peacock)、蝴蝶(butterfly)喻人之美(beauty)，用癞蛤蟆(toad)、章鱼(octopus)喻人之丑(ugliness)，用猴子喻人聪明(clever)，用驴子(ass)喻人愚蠢(stupid)，用羔羊(lamb)、鸽子(dove)喻人性情温顺(meek)，用熊(bear)、黄蜂(wasp)喻人脾气暴躁(bad-tempered)，用天鹅喻人姿态优美(graceful)，用河马(hippopotamus)喻人手脚笨拙(clumsy)，用母牛(cow)喻人庄重(solemn)，用母狗(bitch)喻人淫荡(lewd)，用蠕虫(worm)喻人卑贱(humble)，用火鸡(turkey)喻人嫉妒(jealous)，用狗(dog)喻人

忠实(faithful),用狐狸(fox)喻狡猾(sly),用牡蛎(oyster)喻人沉默寡言(dumb),用母猪(sow)喻人喝得酩酊大醉(drunk),用三月兔(March hare)喻人疯狂(mad),用教堂老鼠(church mouse)喻人贫穷(poor),用鹰(eagle)喻人目光锐利(sharp-eyed),用鼹鼠(mole)喻人眼瞎(blind),用蝮蛇(adder)喻人耳聋(deaf),用鸕(coot)喻人秃顶(bald)用鹌鹑(partridge)喻丰满(plump),用獾(badger)喻色灰(grey),用乌鸦(crow)喻色黑(black),用鲸(whale)喻庞大(large),用鲱鱼(herring)喻细小(thin),等等。

在英语中,人们以动物为喻,创造了大量的丰富多彩的习语和常用熟语:

as deaf as an adder	充耳不闻,全然听不见
as busy as an ant	忙如蚂蚁
as angry as an ape	狂怒如猿
as wanton as an ape	十分任性
as stupid as an ass	愚蠢如驴
as drunk as an ass	烂醉如泥
as naked as an ass	一丝不挂
as grey as a badger	色灰如獾
as bold as a badger	胆大如獾
as blind as a bat	眼瞎得像蝙蝠
as sleepy as a bat	睡得像蝙蝠
as hungry as a bear	饥饿如熊
as drunk as a bear	醉如泥
as rude as a bear	暴如熊
as surly as a bear	暴如熊
as cross as a bear	脾气坏得像熊
as busy as a beaver	忙如海狸
as mad as a beaver	狂如海狸

as brisk as a bee	像蜜蜂一样轻快
as busy as a bee	像蜜蜂一样忙碌
as free as a bird	像鸟儿一样自由
as lewd as a bitch	像母狗一样淫荡
as common as blackbirds	像山鸟一样普通
as rare as black swans	像黑天鹅一样稀罕
as fierce as a boar	像野猪一样凶
as snug as a bug in a rug	像臭虫躺在毯子里一样舒服
as strong as a bull	力大如牛 壮如牛
as surly as a bull	像公牛一样暴
as fierce as a bull	像公牛一样凶猛
as lusty as bullocks	壮如(小公)牛
as beautiful as a butterfly	像蝴蝶一样漂亮
as light as a butterfly	像蝴蝶一样轻快
as gaudy as a butterfly	像蝴蝶一样华丽
as wanton as a calf	像小牛犊一样任性
as ignorant as a carp	非常无知,愚昧如鲤
as nimble as a cat	像猫一样敏捷
as cross as a cat	脾气跟猫一样坏
as jealous as a cat	非常嫉妒
as tame as a chicken	驯服得像小鸡一样
as close as a clam	一毛不拔 非常吝啬
as nimble as a colt	像小马一样灵巧
as bald as a coot	像番鸟一样秃顶
as stupid as a coot	像番鸟一样傻呆呆的
as solemn as a cow	像母牛一样板着脸孔
as silly as a crab	傻得像螃蟹
as merry as a cricket	像蟋蟀一样快活

as worried as a cricket	惶惶不安
as jealous as a crocodile	嫉妒心很强的
as black as a crow	黑得像乌鸦
as hoarse as a crow	嗓子哑得像乌鸦叫
as lousy as a cuckoo	像杜鹃一样邋遢
as crabbed as a cuckoo	脾气十分乖戾的
as cunning as a cuttle-fish	跟乌贼一样狡猾
as fleet as a deer	捷足如鹿
as agile as a deer	像鹿一样敏捷
as dead as a dodo	早已绝种的 彻底废弃的
as dirty as a dog	脏得像狗
as wary as a dog	像狗一样有警惕性
as faithful as a dog	像狗(对主人)一样忠实
as mad as a dog	像疯狗一样
as cold as a dog's nose	冷得像狗鼻子
as proud as a dog in a doublet	像穿了衣裳的狗一样骄傲
as stupid as a donkey	蠢如驴
as mild as a dove	像鸽子一样温和
as harmless as a dove	毫无害处的,毫无恶意的
as sharp-eyed as an eagle	眼睛像老鹰一样锐利
as slippery as an eel	滑如泥鳅
as big as an elephant	其大如象
as vindictive as an elephant	报复心十分强烈的
as thirsty as a fish	如鱼渴水
as mute as a fish	像鱼一样默不出声
as dumb as a fish	像鱼一样哑口无言
as busy as a bag of fleas	像一袋跳虱一样忙碌
as lazy as a foal	懒得像小驹子

as crafty as a fox	像狐狸一样狡猾
as cunning as a fox	像狐狸一样精明
as red as a fox	颜色红得像狐狸
as naked as a frog	一丝不挂,裸如蛙
as cold as a frog	像青蛙一样冷冰冰的
as ignorant as a goat	非常无知
as lewd as a goat	十分淫荡
as quick footed as a goat	捷足如山羊
as silly as a goose	傻得像呆头鹅
as lovely as a grasshopper	快活得像小蚱 蜢
as timorous as a hare	胆小如鼠
as fast as a hare	像兔子一样跑得快
as wild as a hare	像野兔一样疯野
as mad as a March hare	狂如三月兔
as keen as a hawk	像鹰一样敏捷
as hungry as a hawk	饥如饿鹰
as fastidious as a nun's hen	很难伺候的
as fat as a hen in the forehead	胖得像母鸡的额头
as limp as a herring	像鲱鱼一样柔软
as thin as a herring	像鲱鱼一样细小
as salty as a herring	咸得像鲱鱼
as close-packed as herrings	像鲱鱼一样挤得密密麻麻
as clumsy as a hippopotamus	笨拙得像河马
as hungry as a horse	像饿马似的
as hard as a horse's hoof	坚硬得像马蹄
as ugly as a horse's head	丑得像马脑袋
as hungry as a hunter	饿得像猎狗
as mild as a kitten	像小猫一样温和

as miserly as a kite	十分吝啬的
as frisky as a lamb	像羔羊一样蹦蹦跳跳
as gentle as a lamb	像羔羊一样温和
as mild as a lamb	像羔羊一样温柔
as meek as a lamb	像羔羊一样温顺
as brisk as a lark	快活得像百灵鸟
as cheerful as a lark	快活得像百灵鸟
as happy as a lark	快活得像百灵鸟
as strong as a lion	像狮子一样威力强大
as brave as a lion	像狮子一样勇猛
as bold as a lion	莽如雄狮
as cruel as a lion	像狮子一样残暴
as red as a lobster	红得像大龙虾
as timorous as a louse	胆子小得像虱子 胆小如鼠
as mute as a mackerel	哑口无言
as dead as a mackerel	像青花鱼一样毫无感觉
as cheap as a mackerel	便宜得像青花鱼 十分便宜
as blind as a mole	盲如鼯鼠
as agile as a monkey	猴子般敏捷
as mischievous as a monkey	像猴子一样淘气
as glum as any monkey	忧虑得跟猴子一样
as silent as a mouse	静如鼠
as poor as a church mouse	穷得像教堂鼠 一贫如洗
as small as a mouse	小得像耗子
as drunk as a mouse	烂醉如泥
as numerous as mice	多如耗子
as stubborn as a mule	顽固得像驴子
as obstinate as a mule	顽固得像驴子

as merry as a nightingale	像夜莺一样快乐
as lovely as a nightingale	像夜莺一样快乐
as awake as a nightingale	像夜莺一样容易惊醒
as ugly as an octopus	像章鱼一样丑陋
as sleepy as an owl	像猫头鹰一样困
as stupid as an owl	十分愚蠢
as fat as a ox	肥壮如牛
as comfortable as an oyster	舒服得像牡蛎
as plump as a partridge	像鹌鹑一样丰满 胖墩墩的
as proud as a peacock	骄傲得如同孔雀一样
as vain as a peacock	虚荣得像孔雀
as gaudy as a peacock	华丽得像孔雀
as desolate as a pelican	孤独得像塘鹅 十分孤独
as obstinate as a pig	顽钝如猪
as fat as a pig	肥得像猪一样
as lousy as a pig	像猪一样邋遢
as greedy as a pig	像猪一样贪吃
as big as a christmas pig	肥得像圣诞节的猪
as cunning as a dead pig	像死猪一样狡猾
as fat as a quail	像鹌鹑一样肥胖
as timid as a rabbit	像兔子一样胆小 胆小如鼠
as scared as a rabbit	有如受惊之兔
as wet as a drowned rat	湿得像落水耗子 如落汤鸡
as black as a raven	黑得像乌鸦
as black as a raven's wing	像乌鸦翅膀一样黑
as black as a raven's plume	像乌鸦羽毛一样黑
as naked as a robin	像知更鸟一样全身溜光
as trustful as a robin	像知更鸟一样轻信可欺

as wise as a serpent	像妖蛇一样精灵
as hungry as a shark	饿得跟鲨鱼一样
as harmless as a sheep	毫无恶意的 毫无害处的
as soft as a silk-worm	像蚕一样柔软
as slow as a snail	慢得像蜗牛
as clever as a snake	十分精灵的
as vile as a sow	非常卑鄙
as dishonest as a sow	极不老实的
as fawning as a spaniel	像长耳朵狗一样摇尾乞怜 阿谀奉承
as cruel as a spider	极为残忍
as swift as a swallow	飞快如燕
as graceful as a swan	姿态有如天鹅般的优美
as white as a swan	跟白天鹅一样
as keen as a terrier	灵敏得像小猎犬
as fierce as a tiger	像老虎一样 凶猛
as furious as a tiger	像老虎一样狂怒
as ugly as a toad	丑得像癞蛤蟆
as silly as a toad	傻乎乎的
as hateful as a toad	像癞蛤蟆一样讨嫌
as poisonous as a toad	像癞蛤蟆一样毒
as slow as a tortoise	慢得像乌龟
as sound as a trout	非常健康
as furious as a tup	像公羊一样勃然大怒
as jealous as a turkey	有强烈嫉妒心的
as numerous as wasps	多如黄蜂
as touchy as a wasp	像黄蜂一样容易被激怒
as large as a whale	庞大如鲸
as hungry as a wolf	饿狼似的