

Ancient Chinese Wisdom in Numbers

Written and Illustrated by Aru

剪紙話成語：數字

圖/白話：周佳儒

英譯：胡素燕、羅伊·皮爾斯



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Ancient Sayings



成語

One Returns With Spring



一元復始

Two Choices One Decision



二者不可兼得

Three Commands Five States



三令五申

Four Seas One Home



四海一家

Five Elements Eight Trigrams



五花八門

Six Senses In Peace



六根清淨

Seven Hands Eight Feet



七手八腳

Eight Faces Beautifully Wrought



八面玲瓏

Nine Oxen Two Tigers' Strength



九牛二虎之力

Ten Perfect Ten Beautiful



十全十美



One Returns With Spring

一元復始

Yī yuán fù shǐ

指天地之氣的運轉。
如同春夏秋冬的循環一樣，
運行且生生不息，
為我們的生活帶來一番新氣象。

例句：人們在過年時互道「一元復始，萬象更新。」來迎接新的一年到來。

出處：《公羊傳·隱公元年》：「元者何？君之始年也。春者何？歲之始也。」

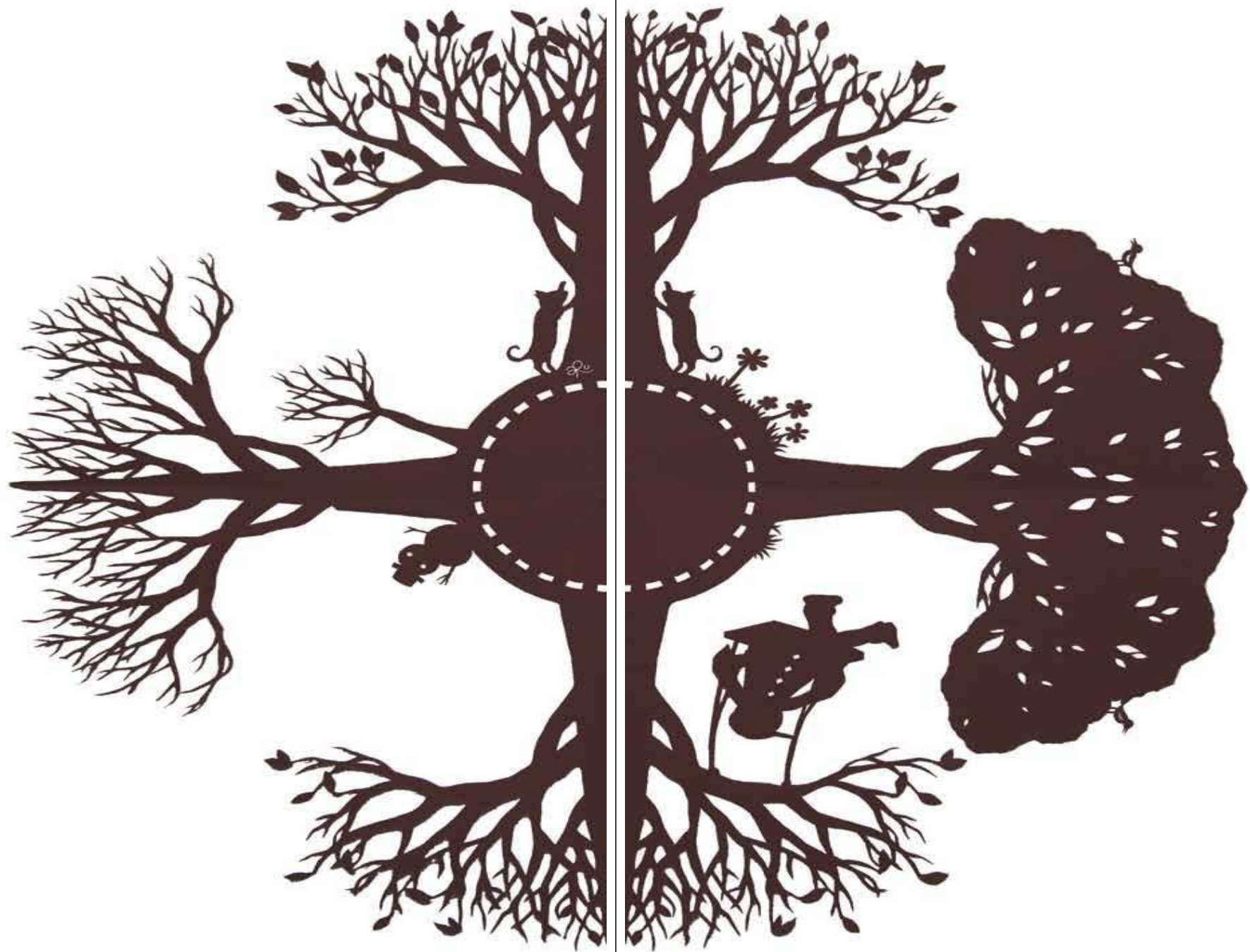


Everything begins with One; spring is the One of the year. Every year we return to the beginning. We can make a fresh start.

Example: To welcome the New Year people say to each other, 'One Returns With Spring, Every Thing Starts New'.

From: *The Gongyang Commentary*, 722 BC.



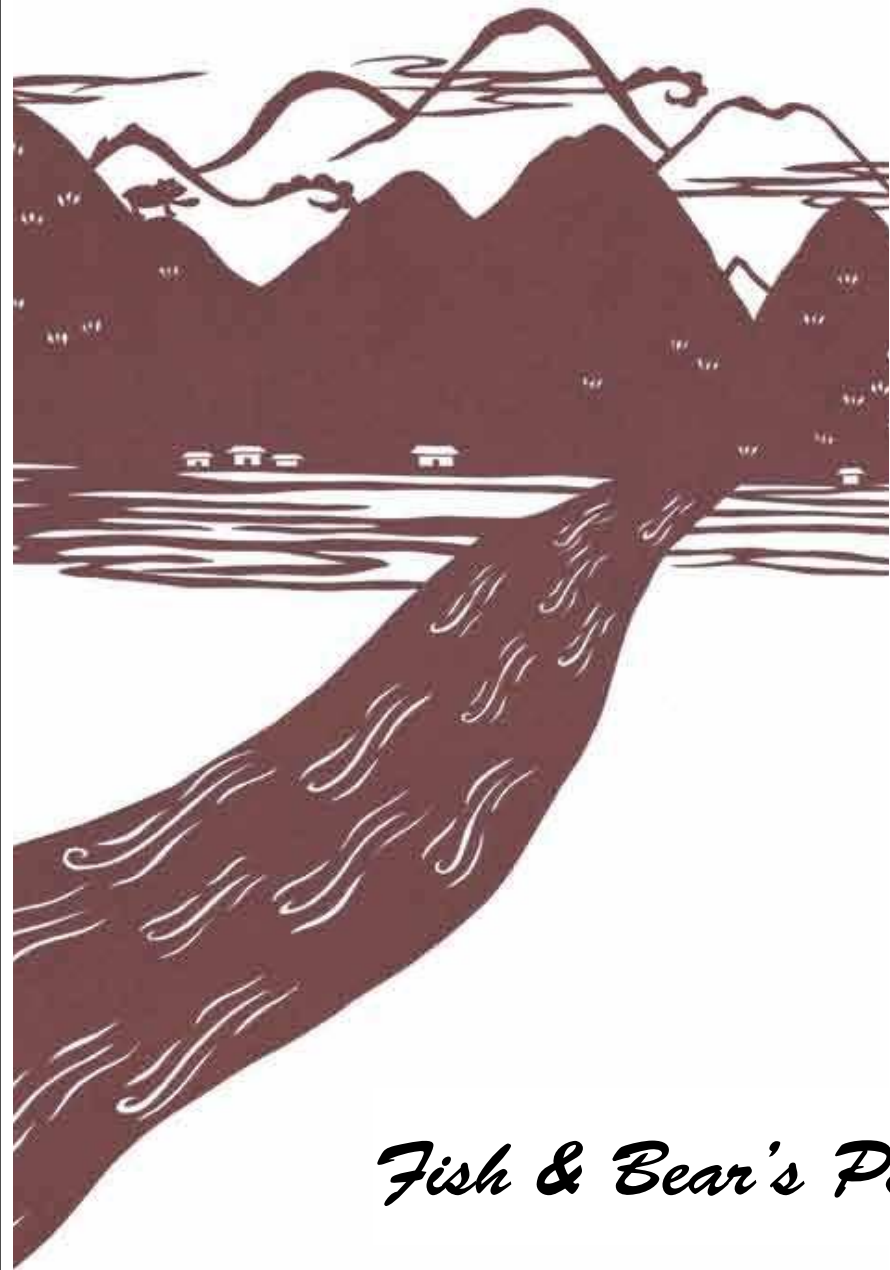




也有人說「魚與熊掌不可兼得」。熊掌與魚都是中國古代的美食。但是熊生活在森林裡，魚卻在水中。到森林中取熊掌就不可能同時在水邊釣魚。現今常用於人們在面臨雙重選擇時的處境。

例句：文藝片裡的男女主角常常面臨愛情與麵包二者不可兼得的情況。

出處：孟子《告子上》：「魚，我所欲也，熊掌，亦我所欲也；二者不可兼得，舍魚而取熊掌也。」



Fish & Bear's Paw



Background to the Book

Chinese traditional sayings that contain ancient wisdom and historical knowledge have formed a special style of communication, both spoken and written, in Chinese society for generations.

Like Tang poetry and Song lyrics, these Chinese maxims are part of the literary heritage of ancient culture and tradition. Such a Chinese saying may be defined as a succinct phrase which sums up a historical story or philosophical principle. The origins of most of these traditional sayings are found in Chinese legends, myths, literary stories, folk-tales, or foreign cultures.

These special sayings were used traditionally in classical writing, but many popular ones have been handed down and are widely applied in daily conversations. The extreme conciseness of the format of Chinese traditional sayings and the riveting stories which they represent make them an excellent starting point for those who seek to understand Chinese language and the culture in which the language is deeply rooted.

後序

在東方社會裡，無論是日常生活中或文學創作裡，我們會引用簡短的成語來形容事物、事件或人，因為成語自古以來就在中國文化中成為可深可淺、意義深遠的表達用語。

從古至今大部分的成語是由四個字組合而成，少數有由三個或五個字以上組成。成語的來源很廣泛，大多取自於野史、文學著作、寓言、異國文化等，蘊藏豐富先人的大智慧。

對於外國讀者而言，認知與學習成語的意義，就如同我們學習英文時會學到西方的諺語，是一個破除文化隔閡、開啟人與人良好溝通的開始。中文讀者也可以自己豐富的文化基礎和思維，進而理解純正英文的表達方式，以期精準和到位的交流。