



# A KALEIDOSCOPE OF CHINESE CULTURE-PART III

The tiger is regarded as the king of wild creatures and symbolizes unlimited power, courage, dignity and military prowess. It is often depicted in Chinese paintings and idioms, including 虎虎生威 (tiger tiger, power and glory), 虎口余生 (survived by a hair from the tiger's mouth) and 虎背熊腰 (tiger back, bear waist).





Probably due to the fact the lion is not native to China, there are few uses of it in idioms, despite the fact it is an equally powerful animal. In the west, the lion is regarded as the embodiment of courage, strength and nobility, similar to how the tiger is perceived by Chinese people.

By contrast, the owl is considered to be a bad omen by Chinese people. It is a bird to be feared and avoided. When an owl enters a house, people believe something bad is sure to follow.

Due to its nocturnal lifestyle and terrifying screenches, it is quite an apt symbol of darkness and bad luck. However, to some western people, the owl is a wise and benevolent creature. "As wise as a owl" is an expression in English.

Other creatures disliked and distrusted by the Chinese are wolves and foxes. The wolf is considered a fierce and ruthless beast devoid of gratitude. Expressions that include the character for wolf are replete with derogatory meanings, including 狼心狗肺 (wolf heart, dog lungs) and 狼子野心 (wolf's greedy ambition). The fox is considered cunning and plotting. A cunning person is sometimes referred to as an old fox and an evil woman as a fox demon.

### Our Services

-  Document Translation Services
-  Interpretation Services
-  Desktop Publishing Services
-  Video Translation Solutions



There is an ambivalent attitude toward dogs in Chinese culture. Though they are considered loyal and reliable, most phrases that include dogs have derogatory connotations, such as 狗腿 or 狗腿子 which means henchman or jackal, 狗急跳墙 a cornered dog will do something desperate, 狗仗人势, being a bully under the protection of a powerful person, and 狐群狗党 a gang of scoundrels. Other expressions with derogatory meanings include 狗彘不如 and 狗彘不如

There are 12 animal in the Chinese zodiac. In order, they are: rat, ox, tiger, rabbit, dragon, snake, horse, sheep, monkey rooster, dog and pig. The Chinese zodiac is a 12-year cycle, with each animal representing one year. There are many legends surrounding the conception of these 12 signs.

One has it that the Yellow Emperor was to choose 12 animals as palace guards. To make things simpler and faster, he decided that the first animals to register would be given the honor. The cat asked his best friend the rat to apply for him, but the rat forgot and so the cat lost his place.

Ever since then, cats and rats have been mortal enemies. The elephant can to register, but the rat snuck into his trunk. The elephant was so shocked he ran away. The ox arrived first, but the rat jumped onto his back and then ahead of him. The tiger and the dragon fought each other for the third place behind the rat and the ox.

The tiger, the king of the mountain, won and came in third. As the dragon was about to take his place after the tiger, the rabbit proposed a race with him. The pig acted as the referee and declared the rabbit the victor, even though this was contrary to the actual outcome.

## Our Services



Document Translation Services



Interpretation Services



Desktop Publishing Services



Video Translation Solutions

The dog, who was an outraged spectator of this fiasco, was so angry he bit the rabbit and was punished by being put in second last place. The last place was reserved for the duplicitous pig. The snake, rooster, horse, sheep and monkey jostled for the remaining places.

## Our Services



Document  
Translation Services



Interpretation  
Services



Desktop  
Publishing Services



Video  
Translation Solutions