Passengers are not allowed to eat or drink on the MTR. The Shanghai subway has similar restrictions, but some people just choose to ignore them.

When breaking rules knowingly, most people do so secretly. They may put a bottle inside their coat and sip from a straw, or take a bite from a biscuit when no one is looking.

But a woman was recently caught on video eating chicken feet on the Shanghai subway, openly, shamelessly. She even spat bones on the floor. When other passengers told her to stop, she turned nasty. When they started to take the video, she said she was not afraid of being exposed.

Last month, a woman was caught on camera eating a bowl of instant noodles in a public library in Shandong as if it was the most normal thing to do. The attitude displayed by these people can only be called “明目張膽” (ming2 mu4 zhang1 dan3).

“明” (ming2) “clear,” “overt,” “open,” “目” (mu4) “an eye,” “張” (zhang1) “to give free rein to,” “to indulge” and “膽” (dan3) “gall.” Literally, “明目張膽” (ming2 mu4 zhang1 dan3) “open eye and give free rein to gall.”

It means “openly defiant,” “openly commit acts,” “brazenly (厚顏無恥地),” “flagrantly (太甚地),” “to do evil things openly and unscrupulously (肆無忌憚地).”

“明目張膽” (ming2 mu4 zhang1 dan3) is used to describe callous people who do bad things. A similar idiom is “肆無忌憚” (si4 wu2 ji4 dan4). These idioms cannot be used to describe courageous deeds.

Terms containing the character “明” (ming2) include:

明天 (ming2 tian1) – tomorrow
明白 (ming2 bai2) – to know, to understand
明顯 (ming2 xian3) – clear, obvious, plain, conspicuous
明信片 (ming2 xin4 pian4) – a postcard