



【水鏡回天錄白話解】

評曹操

REFLECTIONS IN THE WATER-MIRROR: TURNING THE TIDE OF DESTINY

A CRITIQUE OF CAO CAO

宣公上人講於一九八六年八月五日

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姓曹名操字孟德，小名阿瞞。東漢沛國譙人。有狡才，為人機警，討黃巾賊有功，出人頭地。董卓之亂，迎漢獻帝至許昌，從此掌握大權，帝成傀儡。用「挾天子以令諸侯」之手段，平定黃河流域群雄割據之勢力，受封為魏公。征蜀伐吳，處處失利，赤壁一戰，險葬火海，棄甲曳兵而逃，至華容道而遇關羽，魂飛天外，苦苦哀求，九死一生，逃回洛陽。一世奸雄，古今鮮有。其子曹丕篡漢，稱為魏文帝，三國鼎立之勢定矣！

註解：

曹操是東漢沛國，今安徽省譙縣人。字孟德，小名阿瞞，所以專會瞞上欺下，十分狡猾。有一次，他想去刺殺董卓，正好董卓屋裡有面鏡子，照出了他藏在身邊的寶劍。董卓就問他，「你拿劍幹什麼？」這時候，他隨機應變，立刻跪下，把劍解下來送給董卓，說，「我是來獻寶劍的。這劍能切金斷玉，特來奉送給丞相。」董卓不疑有他，就把劍留下來，也沒有怪他。由此可見，他的狡猾機警，不是一般人能比得上的。他很會看風頭，風頭一不對，他立即轉舵，隨時都在看風駛船。

當時有黃巾賊作亂。為什麼叫黃巾賊呢？因為賊人的頭上都綁著一條黃巾，所

Text:

His surname was Cao [2nd tone], his first name was Cao [1st tone], his alias was Mengde, and his nickname was Aman. His family was from Qiao of the state of Pei in the Eastern Han Dynasty. He was smart, astute and cunning. He earned his position by suppressing the Yellow Turban rebels. During the time of Dong Zhuo's chaos, he escorted Emperor Xian of the Han Dynasty to Xuchang and seized power. The emperor became his puppet. He subdued the rival warlords along the Yellow River through the strategy of 'holding the emperor to command the warlords,' and was thus granted the title Duke of Wei. However, in his battles against the states of Shu and Wu, he was defeated and was almost killed by fire in the battle at Chibi. He shed his armor and escaped, but was caught by Guan Yu on Huarong Path. He was terrified, yet begged for mercy. He narrowly escaped death and fled to Luoyang. This man was so crafty that throughout history there was no one like him. His son Cao Pei usurped the Han emperor and crowned himself Emperor Wen of Wei. After that, China was divided into three states.

Comment:

Cao Cao was from Qiao county in the state of Pei in the Eastern Han Dynasty (present day Anhui Province). His alias was Mengde and his nickname Aman. He specialized in hiding the truth from his superiors and deceiving the people; he was very cunning. One day, he went to assassinate Dong Zhuo. A mirror hanging in Dong Zhuo's room reflected the sword hidden behind his back. Dong Zhuo asked him, "Why do you carry a sword?" He immediately adapted himself to the changing situation and knelt down, handing the sword to Dong Zhuo. He said, "I came to present this valuable sword to you. This sword can cut through gold and split jade; therefore I sincerely present it to the Prime Minister."



以叫黃巾賊。他奉皇帝的命令去討伐黃巾賊，憑著他狡猾多詐的本事，殺了不少賊人，立下一點軍功，因此而出人頭地。

後來董卓被呂布所殺，曹操就把漢獻帝從洛陽迎到許昌去。漢獻帝把兵權交給他，從此他就大權在握，漢獻帝只是一個牌位，一個傀儡。他就用「挾天子以令諸侯」的方法，平定黃河兩岸群雄割據的勢力，而受封為魏國公。

他又以魏國公的名義去征討西蜀、東吳。那時西蜀岌岌可危，就聯合東吳一起來對付他。他雖然狡猾，可是西蜀和東吳也有不少有才幹的人，於是他到處吃敗仗。

赤壁一戰，還差一點就葬身火海。

赤壁是地名，在湖北省嘉魚縣東北。曹操的八十萬大軍列滿江上，和西蜀、東吳的軍隊會戰。曹營裡都是一些北方軍人，不習慣坐船，一路南來，潮起潮落，人人都被弄得頭昏腦脹，嘔吐不已。爲了減少船的顛簸，曹操就下令用鐵環將所有船隻，首尾首尾鎖在一起，增加穩定力。誰知周瑜的手下黃蓋獻計，用火攻曹操示威似的大陣容。

曹軍所有的船，都被鐵環緊緊地鎖住，動彈不得，頃刻間就烈焰漫天。只見江面上，火逐風飛，一片通紅。曹營中不斷地傳來慘叫聲、馬嘶聲，八十萬甲兵完全潰敗。曹操祇得率領一些殘兵敗將，棄甲曳兵，繞路從華容道逃命，遇到關雲長守著關口，嚇得不知怎麼好。於是苦苦哀求

，露出種種可憐相。關羽不忍心殺他，便放他過去。他這才得九死一生，狼狽地逃回許昌。

他爲人奸猾，是一代的奸雄。他的奸詐，古今以來少有人能比得上。他不但奸猾，而且對人也常懷鬼胎，疑心病很重，所以說，「曹公奸似鬼。」

有次，他帶兵在某個地方作戰。某天，他正拿著一塊雞筋吃，士兵進來問：「丞相，今天出什麼口令？」他看看手中

Dong Zhuo did not suspect or blame him, and kept the sword. This episode displayed his unrivaled cunning and astuteness. He knew how to watch the trends and constantly changed course in accordance with the direction of wind; that is, as soon as the circumstances changed, he immediately adapted himself to them.

At that time, the Yellow Turban rebels were causing problems. Why were they named the Yellow Turban rebels? Because each one wore a yellow band around his head. He followed the emperor's order to suppress the Yellow Turban rebels. Using his cunning skills, he had killed many enemies and had some military achievements, thus he stood out from the crowd.

Later on, after Dong Zhuo was killed by Lü Bu, Cao Cao escorted Emperor Xian of the Han Dynasty from Luoyang to Xuchang. After the Han Emperor Xian granted him military power, he controlled the emperor as a puppet. He thus subdued those rival warlords along the banks of Yellow River by mean of 'holding the emperor to command the warlords,' and earned the title Duke of the State of Wei.

As the Duke of Wei, he attacked the Western Shu and Eastern Wu states. When the Western Shu was in danger, they joined together with the Eastern Wu to fight against him. Although he was cunning, there were many talented people in the Western Shu and the Eastern Wu, so he was defeated many times and was nearly engulfed in flames during the battle at Chibi.

Chibi was the name of a place located in the northeast of Jiayu County in Hubei Province. Cao Cao's eight hundred thousand troops were distributed all over the river to fight against the Western Shu and the Eastern Wu. Most of Cao's soldiers were from the north, so they were not experienced boatmen. On the waterway going southbound, with the tides going up and down, they all became dizzy and disoriented, and vomited all along the way.

In order to decrease the rocking of the boats, Cao Cao commanded that they use iron chains to tie the stern of every boat to the head of the next boat, thereby stabilizing them. He did not expect that one of Zhou Yu's men, Huang Gai, would come up with a tactic to set fire to Cao Cao's huge army. All of Cao's boats were tightly locked together with iron chains, unable to move at all. Suddenly ferocious flames burst into the sky, and the fires, being blown by the wind, covered the river. Throughout Cao's camp, the ceaseless sounds of men screaming and horses neighing could be heard as the fire spread. The army of eight hundred thousand was completely defeated.

Along with a few surviving generals and soldiers, and without any armor, Cao Cao barely escaped through Huaron Path. He ran into Guan Yunchang, who was guarding the path, and nearly scared him to death. He had no choice but to beg for mercy. He put on a pitiful appearance, and Guan Yu was merciful and released him. He narrowly escaped death and fled back to Xuchang in distress.

He was a very crafty and devious leader of his era. His treacherous cun-



的雞筋，脫口而出：「雞筋。」軍隊中為防奸細的滲透而有口令，口令只有本軍的人才知道，外邊的人不清楚。軍人與軍人見面，若互不認識時，就以口令來識別自己人。比如對方喊「風調」，應回答「雨順」；若答「下大雹子」，就不對了，馬上就會被抓起來。如果口令是「雞筋」，就應答「魚刺」。

當時曹營裡有個叫楊修的，知道曹操下了「雞筋」的口令以後，就對大家說：「你們趕快收拾東西吧！」丞相就要班師回朝了。」於是大家就開始整理行裝，準備要走。曹操一看就問，「你們在幹什麼？」「不是要回朝了嗎？」曹操大怒：「誰說的？誰說要回朝的？」「楊修說的。」

曹操就找楊修來問，「你為什麼叫大家收拾東西，班師回朝呢？」楊修說，「因為丞相出了『雞筋』的口令。此雞筋是食之無味，棄之可惜，所以我知道丞相想要回朝了。」

曹操聽了，心想，「誰也不知道我在想什麼，他卻能猜得到我的心意，留他不得。」於是即刻命人把他推出去斬了，然後下令回朝。他就這麼厲害，所以說他是一代奸雄。

他的兒子曹丕後來篡了漢朝的皇位，自立為魏文帝，形成魏、蜀、吳三國鼎立的形勢，中國遂陷入長期的分裂。

曹操本來亦有意要作皇帝，但是還不敢明目張膽地篡位，於是就受封為魏國公。在他的兩個兒子中，大兒子曹丕不及二兒子曹子建（曹植）那麼聰明，有才智。曹操本想讓曹子建來繼承他，因此曹丕十分妒嫉曹子建。

曹丕當了皇帝以後，就一直想要除掉曹子建。有一天，他喚曹子建上殿，當眾對他說，「大家都說你有才學，你若能在七步之內作一首詩，我就放過你；你若作不出來，就是欺世盜名，我就殺了你。」

ning was unmatched throughout history. He was not only crafty but also very suspicious of others. That is, he always mistrusted others. So it is said: 'Lord Cao was as crafty as a ghost.'

This is what happened once while he was commanding a war. One day, he was eating a piece of chicken tendon, and a soldier came to ask, "Prime Minister, what is today's password?" He took a look at the chicken tendon in his hand and said, "Chicken tendon." The military password was to prevent the penetration of spies. Only the soldiers in this troop would know the password, not the outsiders. When a soldier met a stranger, they identified each other by the password. When one said, "timely wind" the other should respond, "favorable rain." If the response was "hailstorm" which was incorrect, he would be immediately arrested. If the password was "chicken tendon," the response should be 'fishbone'.

Yang Xiu, a man in Cao's camp, knowing that Cao Cao had given the password 'chicken tendon,' told everyone, "Quickly pack your things! The Prime Minister is ready to return." Seeing everyone packing up and ready to move out, Cao Cao asked, "What are you doing?" Someone responded, "Aren't you going back?" Cao Cao was upset: "Who said that? Who said we are going back?" He answered Cao Cao, "Yang Xiu said that." Cao Cao questioned Yang Xiu, "Why did you tell everyone to get packed and be ready to go back?"

Yang Xiu answered, "Because the Prime Minister gave the password 'chicken tendon.' Chicken tendon is something that is tasteless, yet deserves to be kept--so I knew that the Prime Minister wanted to go back." Hearing this, Cao Cao thought, "No one knows what I am thinking, but this man can read my mind. I can't let him live." He had the man killed, then ordered the troops to go back. He was so devious, so he was called the most treacherous leader of his era.

His son Cao Pei usurped the position of emperor of the Han Dynasty and gave himself the title Emperor Wen of Wei. China thus was divided equally into three states, Wei, Shu and Wu, for a long period of time.

Cao Cao intended to be the emperor, but dared not usurp the position. He was then granted the title Duke of Wei. Both of his sons, Cao Pei and Cao Zijian, were very smart and talented. Cao Cao at first wanted Zijian Cao to inherit his position which made Cao Pei very jealous.

Once Cao Pei became the emperor, he was eager to get rid of Cao Zijian. One day, he called Cao Zijian to the court and announced, "They all say that you are every talented. If you can compose a poem within seven steps, I will release you. If you can't do it, you are falsely making a name for yourself so I will kill you." Cao Zijian then walked seven steps and composed a very famous poem:

Making a fire with beanstalks to cook beans,
The beans in the pot are crying.
Both are produced from the same root.
Why does one cook the other with such haste?



曹子建當場走了七步，作出一首名詩，「煮豆燃豆箕，豆在釜中泣；本是同根生，相煎何太急？」意思是說，豆箕和豆都是一條根生出來，但是卻用豆箕燒火來煮豆子，豆子在鍋裡哀號。我們本來也是出自相同的父母，為什麼你現在要這樣急急地逼害我呢？曹丕聽了以後，也就沒有殺他。

待續



This poem indicates that both the beans and the beanstalks grow from the same root. Yet the beanstalks are used to cook the beans, thus making the beans in the pot, cry. We are both from the same parents; why are you harming me with such haste?" Hearing this poem, Cao Pei did not kill him.

To be continued

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「暮鼓晨鐘奇奇奇」，這就像暮鼓晨鐘似的來驚醒我們世間人，我們修道的人，不要盡貪快，不要像抽鴉片煙過癮似的很快，但是犯癮了，也很難受的。這暮鼓晨鐘就是驚醒我們一般人的迷夢，一般人的執著。才修了兩天半，就說：哦！我沒修成，我退心了！這是給人一個暮鼓晨鐘。奇奇奇，他能無疾而終，能以說完了這話就圓寂了。你看這不是來去自由嗎？一般人看這個來去自由，都很奇怪的！所以奇奇奇，你們誰願意懷疑嘛，就疑疑疑。

(本文完)


(Continued from page 13)

Evening drums and morning bells—strange, strange, strange! This was like the evening drum and morning bells, which warn us, as cultivators, not to be impatient and greedy for quick results. We should not be like opium smokers, who get high fast, but find withdrawal difficult to endure. Thus, the evening drum and morning bells startle us awake from our confused dreams and the attachments of ordinary people. After cultivating for two and a half days, we say, "Oh, I have not succeeded in my cultivation. I'm giving up."

After he finished speaking, he entered the stillness. Isn't this being free to come and go? Ordinary people see this as being very strange, and so the verse says, "Strange, strange, strange!" If any one of you has doubts, it could read, "Doubtful, doubtful, doubtful!"

(The End)



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