



周處 Zhou Chu

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王雪等英譯修訂

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English Translation Revised by Suew Wong and Others

西晉江蘇宜興人，名處字子隱。少孤，母子相依為命。青年時，膂力過人，好勇鬥狠，游手好閑，橫行鄉里，人皆惡之，敢怒不敢言。一日，見老者長吁短嘆。處問老者曰：「國泰民豐，所愁何事？」老者曰：「三害未除，何樂可言。」處問：「何為三害？」老者曰：「三害者，南山猛虎，長橋蛟龍，鄉里周處。」處聞之，生大慚愧改過自新，誓除三害，為民造福。

乃至南山射猛虎，長橋斬蛟龍。對鄉里父老言：「今二害已除，周處再作惡，上天所不容。」於是發憤讀書（讀書亭今猶在），後為將軍，智勇雙運，百戰百勝，保衛疆土，報效國家。古人云：「人非聖賢，孰能無過，過勿憚改，善莫大焉。」

周處是西晉江蘇省宜興縣人，名處，字子隱。處就是地方，隱就是隱藏，是他隱遯的地方。顧名思

Zhou Chu of the Western Jin was from Yixing, Jiangsu Province in China. His given name was Chu and courtesy name Ziyin. Zhou's father died when he was young, so Zhou and his mother lived together and depended on each other for survival. In his youth, he had great strength, but was violent and combative; he idled about all day long and was a rascal in the village. Everyone hated him, but was afraid to speak out although they simmered inside. One day when Zhou saw an elder sighing, he asked, "The country is peaceful and people enjoy abundance, so what is troubling you?" The elder replied, "There are still three evils not yet eliminated, so what is there to be pleased about?" "What are the three evils?" asked Zhou. The elder answered, "The three evils are the fierce tiger on Southern Mountain, the dragon under Long Bridge, and Zhou Chu in our village." On hearing this, Zhou felt great remorse and resolved to reform and start anew. He vowed to eliminate the three evils to benefit the people.

So he shot dead the fierce tiger on Southern Mountain and slayed the dragon under Long Bridge. He announced to the elders in the village: "Now two of the three evils have been eliminated. Heaven will not tolerate it if Zhou Chu ever commits evil again." Therefore, he made a firm resolve to study (at the pavilion which is still existing) and he went on to become a general. Imbued with wisdom and bravery, he won every battle, defended the territory, and served his country. An ancient saying goes: "People are not sages, so who does not make mistakes? Having made mistakes, do not be afraid of correcting them. There is no deed better than this."

Commentary:

Zhou Chu was of the Western Jin Dynasty, and was from Yixing, Jiangsu province in China. His given name was Chu and courtesy name Ziyin. In Chinese, Chu means

義，這個人是示現瘋狂，他並不是真正的鄉下的一個害。他是有來歷的，他不願光芒外露，願韜光晦跡，現出這麼個樣子令人不認識他。

他的父親早死，於是母子兩個相依為命。由這個看來，就知道這個人不是很壞的，要是壞的話，他不會和母親在一起。外表上看他，是很不守規矩，相信實際上不是真的。

年輕的時候，遊手好閒，好吃懶做，終日無所事事，遊蕩玩樂，不務正業，不讀書也不認字。好勇鬥狠，膂力過人，力量比其他人人都大，常常打架，用力量欺負其他人。因此，鄉黨鄰里的人都很憎惡他，他也就很孤立的。

有一天，他遇到一個老者在嘆氣。周處見老者這麼大的年紀，為什麼還在唉聲嘆氣？覺得很奇怪，就問他：「現在國泰民豐，國家太平，百姓豐衣足食，你為什麼要嘆氣呢？」老者對他說：「現在有三種害擾亂社會，咱們有什麼可歡喜的呢？」周處就問：「三害是什麼？」老者說：「第一害是南山的猛虎，常常出來吃人、吃畜生，老百姓都束手無策。第二害是長橋的蛟龍，常常噴一種毒氣，令人得一種瘟疫傳染病，總也不好。第三害就是鄉里有周處，橫行霸道，欺壓鄉黨鄰里。」

周處聽後，生大慚愧，發誓要改過自新。於是他到南山用箭射死猛虎，到長橋斬蛟龍。斬了之後，他就對鄉里父老說：「現在三害已除二，我周處從今開始一定要改變我的行為及思想，若我再不改惡向善，恐怕天也不容我了。」從此發憤讀書，後來做到大將軍，智勇雙運。

周處過去好勇鬥狠，就像黑社會的流氓；改過之後，用智慧、勇氣、武力來應付敵人。他到什麼地方都旗開得勝，對於保衛疆土，安定社會秩序有很大的貢獻，成為國家的棟樑。由這一段公案來看，無論是什麼人，要能知道錯了，改過自新，這就是大善。

☞待續

“place” and Yin means “living in seclusion” or “a self hidden from view.” Although he appeared unrestrained, he was not really an evil person in the village. He had some notable skills but did not show them. He concealed his light and did not expose any trace of his capability so that nobody would recognize his true self.

Zhou's father died when he was still young. So mother and son relied on each other for their livelihood. From this we can see that Zhou was not really a bad person, for if he were, he would not have lived with and cared for his mother. Although it appeared that he did not abide by the rules, it was in fact not true.

In his youth, he idled about, and was gluttonous and lazy. He did nothing all day long, loafing around and amusing himself. He did not have a job and was illiterate because he did not go to school. He had great strength that surpassed others, so he was aggressive and fond of competing and fighting. Since he was strong, he often fought and used his strength to bully people. All villagers hated him, so Zhou was isolated and lonely.

One day, when Zhou saw an elder sigh, he wondered why such an elderly person would express sadness and enquired, “The country is peaceful and the people are prosperous, so why are you sighing?” The elder replied, “There are three evils harming society. What joy is there?” “What are the three evils?” asked Zhou. The elder replied, “The first is the fierce tiger on Southern Mountain, which frequently comes out to eat humans and livestock. People do not know how to deal with it. The second evil is the dragon under Long Bridge. It often emits poisonous fumes, causing intractable epidemics. The third is Zhou Chu in the village who is unruly and bullies and oppresses people.”

Hearing this, Zhou became very remorseful and resolved to reform. So he went to Southern Mountain and shot dead the fierce tiger with an arrow, and at Long Bridge he slayed the dragon. He then announced to the elders in the village: “Now two of the three evils have been eliminated. From now onwards, I, Zhou Chu will definitely change my behavior and thinking. If I do not change, I fear heaven will no longer tolerate me!” Therefore, he made a firm resolve to study, and armed with wisdom and courage, he went on to become a general.

In the past, he used to compete, fight, and behaved like a gangster. After reforming, he overcame the enemies with his wisdom, bravery and military prowess. He won every battle and contributed greatly to his people by defending the territory and stabilizing the society. Thus, Zhou became a pillar of the country. From Zhou's story, we learn that knowing and correcting one's mistakes, reforming and starting anew, and changing from bad to good is a great goodness.

☞To be continued