



## 楚石梵琦禪師《西齋淨土詩》

### Chan Master Chushi Fanqi's Pure Land Poems of the West Studio

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西齋結社 英譯 / 楊維光 修訂

Chan Master Chushi Fanqi of Tianning Monastery in Haiyan County of Ming Dynasty  
English translation by West Studio Club / Revised by Yong Wei Kwong

梵琦禪師，字楚石，俗姓朱，浙江省寧波象山人。母張氏，夢日墮懷而生琦。師在襁褓中，有神僧撫之曰：此兒佛日也，故小字曇曜。自幼知有西方阿彌陀佛，晨朝十念，無有廢忘。

九歲於嘉興永祚寺，依族祖晉翁洵師剃度，十六歲受具。閱楞嚴經有所省悟，到徑山參元叟端公，不契。尋應詔書寫大藏經，至北京。一夕聞西樓鼓聲，豁然大悟！述偈曰：

Chan Master Fanqi was styled Chushi and his secular family name was Zhu. He was a native of Xiangshan in Ningbo, Zhejiang Province. His mother, who was of the Zhang clan, dreamt of the sun dropping into her cradling arms and she awoke to give birth to Master Fanqi. When he was cradled by his mother, a divine monk appeared, patted him and said, "This baby is destined to be a Buddha Sun." Thus his nickname was "Tanyao", whereby "Tan" is the family name of Shakyamuni Buddha and "yao" means "sun." Since young, he had already heard of Amitabha Buddha in the Western Pure Land, and he would recite the Buddha's name ten times every morning without fail.

At age nine, he had his head shaved, left the home life, and took refuge under Master Jingxun, an elder clansman, at Yongzuo Monastery in Jiaxing. He received the full ordination at sixteen. While reading the *Shurangama Sutra*, he had an awakening.

崇天門外鼓騰騰，  
募筭虛空就地崩，  
拾得烘爐一片雪，  
卻是黃河六月冰。

還徑山，謁元叟。遂蒙印可。後出主嘉興副臻寺，永祚寺，本覺寺，賜號佛日普照——慧辯禪師。

再主報恩寺、光孝寺、天寧寺，尋退隱永祚寺，築室號西齋，一意淨業。定中，見大蓮華，充滿法界。阿彌陀佛，相好端嚴，坐於華上。眉間白毫，放出光明，光中現出西方聖境。觀音勢至在佛左右，海眾圍繞。

因作懷淨土詩傳於世。洪武初，三次為帝召說法，皇情大悅。不幾年，在天界寺，集經論，將入奏，忽示微疾。越四日，沐浴更衣，書偈曰：

真性圓明，本無生滅；  
木馬夜鳴，西方日出。

調同道夢堂噩公曰：「師兄，我去矣！」公曰：「子往何去？」答曰：「西方」。噩曰：「西方有佛，東方無佛耶？」琦厲聲一喝，泊然而化，年七十五歲，茶毗齒舌數珠不壞。（角虎集載）

蓮池大師讚曰：

本朝第一流宗師，  
無尚於楚石矣。  
築石室區曰西齋，  
自號禪人而淺視淨土者，  
可以深長思也。

靈峰蕩益大師西齋淨土詩讚：



He then set off for Mount Jing to learn under the Noble Duan, Chan Master Yuansou, but did not quite tally with him. Shortly after, he was summoned by imperial decree to the northern capital to transcribe the Buddhist canon. One evening, on hearing the drum-beats from the Western Tower, he suddenly experienced a great awakening!

Thereupon, he composed a verse:

*The drum-beats reverberate outside the Chongtian Gate,  
Spontaneously, the universe rips apart and collapses.  
I pick snowflakes from the blazing stove;  
However, it is the ice in Yellow River in June.*

He returned to Mount Jing to pay his respects to Master Yuansou, who certified him. Later, he was appointed abbot of Fuzhen, Yongzuo and Benjue Monasteries in Jiaying County. The emperor bestowed on him the title “Chan Master Fori Puzhao Huibian” (The Buddha Sun of Universal Illumination, Wisdom and Eloquence).

Subsequently, he was appointed abbot of Bao'en, Guangxiao and Tianning Monasteries, before retiring to Yongzuo Monastery where he built a hut and named it the “West Studio.” There, he focussed on Pure Land practice, and in his state of samadhi, saw a great lotus flower which occupied the entire Dharma Realm. Amitabha Buddha, adorned with fine hallmarks, was sitting on the lotus. He emitted light from the white tuft between his eyebrows, and appearing within the radiance was the sagely state of the Western Pure Land. Guanyin and Great Strength Bodhisattvas were on his left and right, and sea-vast assemblies of Bodhisattvas surrounded them.

For this reason, he composed for posterity these poems on cherishing the Pure Land. At the beginning of the Hongwu reign of the Ming Dynasty, he was summoned on three occasions to lecture on the Dharma, which pleased the emperor greatly.

稽首楚石大導師，  
 即是阿彌陀正覺，  
 以茲微妙勝伽陀，  
 令我讀誦當參學。  
 一讀二讀塵念消，  
 三讀四讀染情薄，  
 讀至十百千萬遍，  
 此身已向蓮華託。  
 亦願後來讀誦者，  
 同予畢竟生極樂。  
 還攝無邊念佛人，  
 永破事理分張惡。  
 同居淨故四俱淨，  
 圓融直捷超方略。

(明) 四明梵琦楚石 著  
 (清) 西有沙門智旭 選定

待續



Over the next few years, the Master continued to compile the Sutras and Shastras at Tianjie Monastery. When the compilation was completed and about to be submitted to the emperor, he suddenly manifested a slight illness. Four days later, having bathed and changed his robes, he composed the following verse:

*The true nature is perfect and brilliant;  
 Basically, there is no production or extinction.  
 The wooden horse neighs at night,  
 And the sun rises in the west.*

He then told his fellow cultivator, the Noble E, Chan Master Mengtang, “Dharma brother, I am leaving!”

The Noble E asked, “Where are you going?”

He replied, “To the west.”

E further asked, “Is the Buddha only in the west? Is there no Buddha in the east?”

Master Qi responded with a loud shout and passed away silently, aged seventy-five.

After his cremation, numerous pieces of sharira were found, but his teeth and tongue were intact. [Recorded in the *Horned Tiger Anthology*]

Great Master Lianchi’s Verse in Praise:

*You are the foremost Chan Master of our dynasty,  
 No one measures up or surpasses you, Chushi!  
 You built a simple stone hut named West Studio.  
 Those Chan practitioners who disparage the Pure Land,  
 Really need to rethink and reflect upon their stand!*

Great Master Lingfeng Ouyi’s Verse in Praise of the *Pure Land Poems of the West Studio*:

*Reverently, I bow to the Great Guiding Master Chushi,  
 He is likened to the Proper Enlightened Amitabha Buddha.  
 With these subtle, wondrous and supreme gathas,  
 I am able to contemplate and practice as I read or recite them.  
 Reading them once or twice eradicates my thoughts,  
 many as dust motes.  
 Reading them the third or fourth time diminishes my defiled emotions.  
 Reading them tens, hundreds, thousands and tens of thousands of times,  
 My body stakes its claim in the lotus.  
 Also, may all who read and recite them in the future,  
 Be reborn together in the Land of Ultimate Bliss,  
 Gathering in all the boundless Pure Land Practitioners.  
 May all smash forever the evil differentiations of principle and specifics.  
 Once we attain purity in the Land of Sages and Commoners, all Four Lands are purified.  
 This is the most perfect, direct and fastest way, far-surpassing all other methods.*

Written by Master Fanqi Chushi of Siming [Ming Dynasty]

Selected and Endorsed by Shramana Xiyu (Master Ouyi Zhixu) [Qing Dynasty]

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