



覺海慈航度香江（續）

Crossing Hong Kong on the Ship of Compassion in the Sea of Awakening (continued)

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馬來西亞翻譯小組 英譯

比丘尼恒青 修訂

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Venerable Master Hsuan Hua's Biography
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Revised by Bhikshuni Heng Ching

36. 果式皈依

為了引導香港洋化的年輕人，上人方便誘導，以期扶植未來的佛教棟樑。譚果式居士生長在洋化香港，小學時便認識上人，於西樂園第二年的觀音七皈依上人，護持佛教逾五十年。

譚果式居士敘述：

師父對我來說，就好像是我的親人、長輩，這就是為什麼我在放學之後，總是去西樂園的原因。我在學校會事先把功課寫完，然後早一點離開學校，去西樂園見師父，每天就差不多有一小時去讀書給師父聽或者聽師父講故事。師父讓我唸過《高僧傳》、《濟公的故事》；我印象最深的一本，也是我最喜歡的一本——《玉琳國師》。我唸完故事，就回家吃晚飯了。

36. Guo Shi Taking Refuge

To guide the westernized young people in Hong Kong, the Venerable Master used skillful means to nurture his primary Dharma protectors and supporters who would become the future pillars of Buddhism. Upasika Guo Shi Tan grew up in Hong Kong when it was heavily influenced by the British. She met the Venerable Master when she was still in primary school. Later, she took refuge with the Venerable Master during a seven day Guanyin session. This transpired the second year after the Western Bliss Garden was completed. For over fifty years, she has been supporting and protecting Buddhism.

Upasika Tan Guo Shi's Narration:

As for me, the Venerable Master was like an elder member of my family. For this reason, I often went to the Western Bliss Garden directly after school. I would finish my homework at school, leave a bit early, and then head to the Western Bliss Garden to meet the Venerable Master. I would spend about an hour with him during which I would either read aloud books to him or listen to him tell stories. The Venerable Master would allow me to read books such as the *Records of High Sanghans* and the *Stories of Jigong* (濟公). One favorite story that left an especially deep impression on me was by the National Master Yulin (玉琳). After reading these stories, I would go home and have dinner.

我一開始遇到師父，並沒有馬上皈依；即使學會打法器，甚至還在師父的皈依法會上幫忙，但我始終沒有皈依——對我來說，那只是一種形式，不知道還需要皈依。因為他是我父母親的師父，我本應該稱師父做「師公」，但對我來說他並不是師公，是「我們的」師父，所以我一直都是稱他「師父」。

儘管在基督教學校讀書，可以背下整本《聖經》，但是我根本不信天主教或者基督教。因為我問老師，如果上帝創造了人類，為什麼又有這麼多的窮人醜人？他為什麼要造這麼不同的人？直到我畢業，老師都沒有回答我的問題。我姐姐是在一所天主教學校上學的，也因為有一些問題沒有得到答案，她始終沒信天主教。當我遇到師父的時候，我問師父相同的問題，師父的回答非常令我信服——「我們做什麼，我們就會得到什麼。」

我也問師父：「如果我有過去生的話，那我過去生是什麼樣的呢？」師父有回答我。我並不是直接問這些問題，而是寫了一首小詩，最後一句是「請問底和根？」師父對我講：「我看過妳的詩，妳真的想要知道妳的根底嗎？」我說：「當然，您說過我們都有很多很多生，我想知道我以前是做什麼的？」他告訴我過去生的我是什麼，但是他說：「我告訴妳妳的過去生，但是妳只能自己知道。以後，妳要幫我的忙的，妳是我的左右手。」我說：「沒問題！」那時我總是想一些很突出、很特別的問題，而且我很好勝，所以我就那麼回答

When I first met the Venerable Master, I did not take refuge immediately. Even though I had learned how to use the Dharma instruments and had assisted the Venerable Master during refuge ceremonies for others, I myself had not yet taken refuge. For me, it was just a ceremony. I still did not know that I needed to take refuge. As the Venerable Master was the Shifu (Master) of my parents, I should have addressed him as Grandmaster. But for me, he was not a Grandmaster, but our family's "Shifu." As such, I always called the Venerable Master "Shifu."

Although I studied at a Christian school and could recite entire sections of the Bible from memory as a girl for class, I did not believe in Christianity or Catholicism. Why? Because I asked my teachers in school, "If God created humans, why were there so many poor and ugly people? Why did he create different people different ways? And until the day I graduated, my teachers never answered any of these questions. Incidentally, my older sister studied in a Catholic school, and she also did not get answers to some of her questions like mine. This is the reason she doesn't believe in Catholicism either. When I met the Venerable Master, I asked him the same question, and his answer deeply convinced me, "We reap what we sow."

I followed that by asking him another question, "If I had past lives, what did I look like in them?" The Venerable Master responded. However, since I did not ask him directly, the answer to my question was in response to a poem that I had written which he read. The last line of the poem went this way, "What was my background, and what was my root?" And the Venerable Master said to me, "I have read your poem. Do you want to know your root?" I replied, "Definitely. As you said, we have all had so many lives before. I want to know who I used to be..." Venerable Master told me my previous lives, and then he said, "I have told you your past lives, but you must keep them to yourself. In the future, you have to help me, to be my left and right-hand man." I replied, "No problem!" At that time, I would always think of something different or something special as I was the type who did not like to lose. Hence, I replied to the Venerable Master in this way. Yet, I had never thought of taking refuge, and Venerable Master also did not mention anything about it.

On the sixth lunar month of 1953, the Western Bliss Garden held a seven day Guanyin Dharma session. When I went there, I saw the Venerable Master was lying quietly on a bed without saying a single word. Some people were kneeling beside him, including my mother and sister. Guo Song and her mother were also kneeling beside the bed. Some were crying while others were feeling very sad. I softly asked my sister, "What is the matter? Why are you all kneeling here?" "Shifu refuses to eat. He has not eaten anything these past few days. He will just drink water. Shifu will die!" Nobody dared to

上人。我從沒想過皈依，師父也從來沒有提過。

1953年農曆六月，西樂園舉行觀音七，我去西樂園，看見師父躺在床上，一句話也不說，靜靜的；一些人跪在師父旁邊，我的母親、姐姐、果松和她媽媽也跪在那裡；他們有的在哭，有的很悲傷。我小聲問我姐姐：「怎麼了？為什麼妳們都跪在這裡？」「師父不吃飯，不吃任何東西，這幾天只是喝水，師父會死的！」沒人敢說什麼，那種寂靜非常令人感傷。我跑去師父床邊，跪著對師父說：

「師父，為什麼您不吃東西？」

「香港人太難教化了，他們如此頑固、不聽教，不知道該怎麼教了，我想要離開了。」師父說。

「師父，我記得您在講法的時候，您說您要挽救所有的人，您要度眾生呀！」

「度什麼眾生？他們這麼剛強，我沒辦法度了。」

「您不是教我『無論遇到什麼困難都沒關係，妳都要想辦法克服它』嗎？為什麼您要放棄？」

「可是沒人幫我。」

「我幫您。」我立即脫口而出，連我都不知道自己為什麼會這麼說。

「是嗎？妳會幫助我嗎？」

「是的，如果您吃飯的話，我就幫助您。」

「但是妳還是一個門外漢，妳怎麼幫我呢？」我那時不知道門外漢意味著什麼，我說：

「您說什麼？」

「我說妳是一個門外漢。」

「什麼是門外漢？」

「就是說妳仍然站在門外面。」

「那很簡單，我現在在屋裡面，

say anything. He was so quiet, and everyone felt so sad. I went to his bedside, knelt, and asked him, “Shifu, why won’t you eat?”

“It is so hard to teach and transform the people in Hong Kong. They are so stubborn, and do not listen to instructions. I don’t know how to teach them. I want to leave,” Shifu replied.

“Shifu, I remember during your Dharma lecture, you said you want to help all people. You want to liberate living beings,” I responded.

“Liberate what beings? They are so stubborn. I have no way to take them across,” he said.

“Did you not teach me that ‘Regardless of whatever difficulties we face, we must overcome them?’ Why are you giving up now?” I replied to him.

“But nobody is helping me,” he told me.

I immediately blurted out, “I will help you.” I don’t know why I said this...

“Really? You will help me?” he replied.

“Yes, I will. If you will eat, then I will help you,” I responded to him.

“But you are an outsider of the Way. How can you help me?” He said.

At that time, I did not know what it meant to be “an outsider of the Way.”

“What are you saying?” I asked him.

“I said you are an outsider of the Way.” He said again.

“What is an outsider of the Way?” I asked him.

“That is to say you will always stand outside the door of the Way,” he replied to me.

“That is very simple. Now, I am inside the house. I already came in,” I said to him.

“No. That is not what this means. What I am saying is that you have not taken refuge, therefore, you are still an outsider of the Way,” he told me.

“Have I not already been calling you ‘Shifu?’ I feel that taking refuge is just a ceremony. It doesn’t really mean anything,” I responded to him.

“No, without plotting a square, how can we draw a circle and a square,” he told me.

“That is easy. I can become an insider of the Way. I will take refuge. Is that it, if I take refuge, you will eat and not depart?” I asked him.

Eventually, Shifu began to eat again, and, on the afternoon of the nineteenth day of the sixth lunar month, I officially took refuge. I was still in primary school. After I had taken refuge, my classmates teased me and said I had become a left-home person.”

Guo Jun took refuge before me, but Guo Mi took it later. The Venerable Master wrote a verse for each of our Dharma names. I knew

我已經進來了。」

「不，不是這個意思。我是說妳還沒有皈依，妳還是一個門外漢。」

「我不是已經叫您作師父了嗎？我認為皈依只是一個形式，不代表任何事情。」

「不，無規矩不成方圓。」

「這個很簡單，我可以成為一個門內漢，我皈依就是。是不是我皈依，您就吃飯不走了？」

後來師父終於吃飯了，我也在那天（農曆六月十九）下午正式皈依，那時候我還在念小學。我皈依回去之後，我的同學就嘲笑我，說我是個和尚。

果君比我早皈依，果蜜比我晚皈依。師父為我們各作了一首偈頌，把我們的法名都寫上去。我知道果松有一首，我姐姐也有一首，我不記得師父是怎麼樣寫她們的。師父用我的法名寫的偈是：「精修一乘，儀表萬世；普化同倫，共登佛地。式之！式之！」我請問師父這個偈頌的「式之！式之！」是什麼意思？師父說要我給大家做榜樣，慚愧我一直未能做到！師父這幅墨寶現在還供在我家裡的佛堂。皈依之後，我經常去西樂園那裡，師父叫我幹什麼，我就盡力去做，比如學習佛教儀軌，到法會幫忙。

有一次，師父帶我去見茂峰法師，茂峰法師出家前是一位秀才，出口成詩。老法師在問我的名字之後，用我的名字和法名寫了兩副對聯：「慕勝慕賢為上士，潔心潔志作高人。」

「果能發大菩提願，式合人天模範師。」有一次，師父到我家應供，看到我把這兩副對聯掛在房子裡，就和我開玩笑：「茂峰法師給妳這麼高的評價，把妳捧上天做人天的導師了！」我回答道：「師父，您不是說天人福報享盡後會墮落嗎？我不想去天堂然後掉下來。」師父說：「別擔心，妳掉下來（墮落）了，我會接住（救）妳的。」我說：「好，您說話算話。如果我墮落了，您要來救我。」我們經常會開這樣的玩笑，我從師父那裡學到了很多，我非常非常尊敬他，儘管我有時候和他開玩笑。

◎待續

that Guo Song and my sister had their respective verses, but I can not remember them anymore. However, the Venerable Master used my Dharma name to write the following verse, “Concentrate on a single vehicle. Be a model for tens of thousands of generations. Widely transform all as family, reaching the Buddha Land together. Be a model! Be a model!” (‘式’ means model.)

I asked the Venerable Master about the meaning of the phrase “*Shi zhi! Shi zhi!*” (“式之！式之！”) in this verse. Venerable Master said that I should be a role model for others. But regretfully, I have not been able to do so! The Venerable Master’s precious writing is still on display in the Buddha Hall at my home. After taking refuge, I often went to the Western Bliss Garden, and whatever Venerable Master asked me to do, I would strive to do my best, including learning Buddhist rituals and helping out with the Dharma Assemblies.

One day, Venerable Master took me to see Dharma Master Mao Feng. Before Dharma Master Mao Feng left home to become a monastic, he was a scholar. He would effortlessly speak in poetic verse. The old Dharma Master asked about my name and Dharma name, then used those to write me a couplet: “Admire the achiever and virtuous one. One becomes a great hero. The pure mind and pure aspiration are those of a superior person.” “If a (式 means ‘model’ in this context) can bring forth the great Bodhi resolve, and become a model (式) teacher for gods and humans”]. At one time, the Venerable Master came to my house for a meal offering and saw the two couplets in the room. He teased me and said, “Dharma Master Mao Feng had ranked you so highly that he has put you up there as a teacher for gods and humans.”

I replied to him, “Venerable Master, did you not say that the gods will fall to the lower realms after they use up their blessings? I do not want to go to heaven and fall.” The Venerable Master said, “Do not worry. If you fall, I will catch you.” I said, “Good! Well, I hope you mean it! Once I fall, you will need to come and save me.”

We often made such jokes. I learned a lot from the Venerable Master, and I respect him very much, even though I sometimes joked with him.

◎To be continued