

山水

SHANSHUI

**Selected Five Poems from 'Mountains
and Waters' by Xie Lingyun**

Xie Lingyun (trans. Gérard Dupuy, Giacomo Bruni)

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Translated By: Gérard Dupuy (French and notes), Giacomo Bruni (English)

登永嘉綠嶂山詩

裹糧杖輕策
懷遲上幽室
行源徑轉遠
距陸情未畢
淡激結寒姿
團樂潤霜質
澗委水屢迷
林迴巖逾密
眷西謂初月
顧東疑落日
踐夕奄昏曙
蔽翳皆周悉
疊上貴不事
履二美貞吉
幽人常坦步
高尚邈難匹
頤阿竟何端
寂寂寄抱一
恬知既已交
繕性自此出

Escaladant la montagne de la Falaise Verte, à Yongjia

J'emporte des provisions et ma canne
légère
Remonte le long chemin jusqu'à l'abri
caché
Avance sur un sentier sinueux vers la
source lointaine
Parviens sur la hauteur dans un plaisir
qui se prolonge
Les rides légères de l'eau paraissent
gelées par le froid
Des bambous luisant sous le givre
révèlent leur nature
Au détour des ravins, les eaux sans cesse
se perdent
Les forêts se déploient au milieu d'un
chaos rocheux
Me tournant vers l'ouest, on dirait la lune
naissante
Regardant vers l'est, serait-ce le soleil
qui se couche
Le crépuscule tardif rejoint l'aube en-
core sombre
Tout ce qui couvre d'ombre, je l'ai visité
Déclin, qu'il est important de se détach-
er
Marche, qu'il est beau d'avancer sur sa
voie
L'homme retiré du monde avance d'un
pas assuré
Vers des buts élevés, cachés, si difficiles
à atteindre
En quoi un « oui » et un « non » peu-
vent-ils différer ?
Dans l'apaisement, se confier à l'Unité
Sérénité et savoir s'unissent dès à
présent
Pour désormais retrouver ma nature.

Climbing the Green Peaks Mountain in Yongjia

Wrapping rations, I lean on a light
staff,
Ascending the winding path to a
secluded lodge.
Walking toward the source, the
trail twists into the distance;
Reaching the mountain, my delight
remains unspent.
Placid ripples congeal in frosty
form,
Bamboo groves gleam, saturated
with frozen dew.
The stream twists through ravines,
its course often lost;
The forest stretches far, cliffs ever
more dense.
Gazing westward, it seems the
rising moon;
Looking eastward, it looks like the
setting sun.
Groping through dusk, evening
and daybreak merge;
I have explored every deep and
secluded recess.
In the "Hexagram Gu," it is noble
not to serve—
Treading the path of integrity
brings steadfast fortune.
The recluse walks with calm and
steady steps,
His lofty purity, remote and unmatched.
What difference lies between him
and me?
In solitude, I entrust myself to
"Embracing the One."
Where Tranquility and Wisdom
already unite,
The cultivation of character
emerges from this.

Probably composed during the autumn of 423—bamboo glistening under the frost—in a mountainous location about twenty li northwest of Yongjia, where there was a large lake. Immersed in a landscape of great beauty, Xie loses his bearings (the points of the compass), but it is the dazzling discovery that dominates. Between light and darkness, the poem develops into a meditation on his own destiny.

Line 13: Quotation from the *Yi Jing*, hexagram 18 蠱 *Gu* "Taking action, the moment when one springs into action";

Line 14: Quotation from the *Yi Jing*, hexagram 10 履 *Lü* "A perilous journey, the moment when one wards off danger."

Line 17: *Laozi*, beginning of chapter XX: "Renounce study, and you will be free from sorrow. How small is the difference between *wei* (a short 'yes') and *o* (a slow 'yes')." Translation by Stanislas Julien. Perhaps we should understand that there is little difference between the Court and exile, between success and opprobrium.

Verse 18: *Lao Zi*, chapter XXII.

Verse 20: Chapter XVI of the *Zhuangzi* is entitled 繕性 *shan xing* "Amending one's nature."

夜發石關亭

隨山踰千裏
浮溪將十夕
鳥歸息舟楫
星闌命行役
亭亭曉月暎
泠泠朝露滴

**Partant, de nuit, du Pavillon de la
Passe Rocheuse**

J'ai parcouru les montagnes sur
des milliers de li
J'ai navigué sur les rivières près de
dix nuitées
Quand les oiseaux rentraient, je
mettais les rames au repos
Les étoiles pâlissantes m'inti-
maient de partir
Suspendue, haute et claire, la lune
de l'aube
Fraîches, les gouttes de rosée du
petit matin.

Night Departure from Shiguan Pavilion

Following the mountains, I've
crossed a thousand li,
Drifting on the streams for ten
nights
Birds return at dusk, I rest my oars
and boat;
The fading stars urged me to con-
tinue my journey
Standing tall and solitary, the
dawn moon shines;
Chill and clear, the morning dew
drips.

Among the poems of Xie Lingyun that have survived, there are few short pieces that seem timeless and spaceless, as if suspended. This one evokes a clear night, between dusk and dawn. Commentators suggest a date around 428, corresponding to Xie's final return to his family estate in Shining.

Line 5: According to J.D. Frodsham, there is an allusion here to the *Yuefu shiji**

樂府詩集：

『月落參橫

北斗闌干』

"The moon sets;
Orion hangs suspended

The Big Dipper crosses the sky"

* The *Yuefu shiji* is a collection of popular songs and poems. The term *yuefu* 樂府 originally referred to a department of the Western Han imperial administration (~206-9), the "Bureau of Music," and then by extension to the flourishing genre of poems to be sung.

登上戍石鼓山詩

旅人心中長久
憂憂自相接
故鄉路遙遠
川陸不可涉
汨汨莫與娛
發春托登躡
歡願既無並
戚慮庶有協
極目睽左右
回顧眺狹
日末澗增波
雲生嶺逾疊
白芷競新苔
綠蘋齊初葉
摘芳芳靡緩
愉樂樂不燮
佳期緬無像
騁望誰云愜

Ascension, à Shangshu, de la
montagne du Tambour de Pierre

Le voyageur a, de longtemps, le
cœur lourd
Assailli par les inquiétudes qui se
succèdent

Qu'il est loin le pays natal !
Au-delà de rivières et de terres in-
franchissables

Le cours des eaux ne me procure
plus de joie

Au début du printemps, j'entame
l'ascension d'un pied léger

Plaisir du paysage et désir de re-
traite ne vont pas ensemble

Affliction et inquiétude sans cesse
se renforcent

Je porte le regard vers l'ouest, au
loin un vaste espace

Puis me tournant vers l'est,
j'aperçois un défilé

Au soleil couchant, le torrent en-
caissé enfle

Des montagnes redoublées nais-
sent des nuages

Les blanches angéliques rivalisent
avec les jeunes bignones

Les vertes marsilées déploient leur
nouveau feuillage

Cueillir des plantes odorantes ne
dissipe pas mes pensées

Musique et sentiment de joie ne
s'accordent plus

Les moments heureux, quand re-
viendront-ils ?

Quand je regarde tout autour, qui
peut se dire satisfait ?

Ascending Stone Drum Mountain at Shangshu

The traveler's heart, long steeped
in sorrow,
Melancholy upon melancholy arise
The road to my homeland lies distant and long
Beyond uncrossable rivers and
lands
For a long time without a companion
In early spring, I seek joy in climbing.
the joy of traveling and the desire
to live in seclusion cannot be
achieved at the same time
Yet sorrow and care come almost
in accord.
Looking left, my gaze meets
boundless plains;
Turning right, ridges forming a
narrow valley
As the sun sets, streams swell their
waves
Clouds gather, ridges layering
upon them.
White angelica vies with new
reeds,
Green duckweed unfurls its first
leaves.
I pluck fragrant blooms, yet find
no solace in their scent;
I delight in music, yet find no harmony
The time of returning home remains
vague and unseen
Though I gallop my gaze afar,
where can true ease be found?

According to J.D. Frodsham, Shigu Mountain 石鼓 is located 40 li west of Yongjia, near the place where the Shangshu River 上戍 flows into the Ou River 歐江. At its summit is a stone that produces a precise note when struck. We are in the period of young shoots - 初葉 *chu ye*: beginning of leaves - that is, in the spring of 423. The poem is characterized by the repetition of characters and sounds on the theme of melancholy linked to the absence of friends and the distance from one's homeland. Xie seeks consolation in the diversity of the landscape—flowers, water, rocks—but finds none. Beginning in sadness, the poem, after a long contemplative loop, ends on the same note.

Line 2: *Chu ci*, "Jiuzhang," "Nine Declamations," 4.

Line 6: *Chu ci*, "Zhaohun," "Recalling the Soul," 9.

Line 16: The character 樂 has two meanings: *le* ("joy/rejoice") or *yue* ("music").

J.D. Frodsham chooses "delight" while Ye Xiaoxue prefers "music."

郡東山望溟海詩

開春獻初歲
白日將悠悠
蕩誌將愉樂
瞰海庶忘憂
策馬步蘭皋
繼控息椒丘
采蕙遵大薄
攀若履長洲
白花香陽林
紫蕭曄春流
非徒不弭忘
覽物情彌道
萱蘇始無慰
寂寞終可求

Depuis la montagne de l'Est, dans
mon district, je contemple la mer

L'arrivée du printemps ouvre l'an-
née nouvelle
Un soleil brillant émerge lente-
ment
Me dégager de mes ambitions
m'apporte la joie
Contempler longuement la mer
me libère de l'inquiétude
Fouettant mon cheval, j'avance
dans des marais aux eupatoires
Le mettant à l'attache, je me re-
pose sur la colline aux poivriers
Cueille des orchidées vivaces tout
au bord d'un vaste bassin
Et ramasse des polliés en suivant
un long rivage
Des fleurs blanches montrent leur
éclat dans la forêt au soleil
Les angéliques pourpres illumi-
nent le cours du printemps
Non seulement je ne parviens pas
à oublier
Mais tout ce que je contemple ra-
vive mes inquiétudes
La « plante d'oubli » ne m'apporte
aucun réconfort
C'est dans la voie du «non agir»
qu'il me faut m'engager.

Gazing at the Vast Sea from the Eastern Mountain of the Commandery

In early spring, the new year
unfolds,
The clear sun rises, distant
and serene.
I cleanse my heart, seeking
joy and ease,
Gazing at the sea, hoping to
forget my worries.
I whip my horse forward by
the orchid-covered marsh,
Rein in and rest upon a hill
fragrant with pepper.
Gathering orchids, I traverse
the thickets,
Plucking pollia, I tread the
long riverbank.
White blossoms gleam in the
sunlit woods,
Purple angelicas shimmer in
the spring stream.
Yet, far from forgetting my
cares,
The sight of these scenes
deepens my yearning.
The Forget-me-not brings no
comfort to my heart,
Only in seclusion I can forget
all sorrows.

Composed on New Year's Day [the first day of the first lunar month] of 423, Xie indulges in lush vegetation reminiscent of certain poems in the *Chu ci*. With a rich vocabulary and a profusion of quotations, he seems to rejoice in this universe that presents itself to him and which he had no idea about.

Lines 1, 2, 3, 4: *Chu ci*, derived in the same form from the poem *Si mei ren*.
Lines 5, 6: *Chu ci*, derived from Qu Yuan's poem *Li sao*.

Lines 7, 8: *Chu ci*, derived from the poem *Si mei ren*

Verses 11: *Shi jing*, poem CLXXXIII

According to J.D. Frodsham with this quotation, Xie is alluding to the misconduct of his enemies led by Xu Xianzhi.

Verse 13: *Shi jing*, poem LXII

The "plant of forgetfulness," translated as "daylily" by S. Couvreur*, is not enough to relieve Xie of the worries that plague him.

Verse 14: *Chu ci*, "Jiubian," "Nine Judgments," 5

『君棄遠而不察兮，雖願忠其焉得
欲寂漠而絕端兮，竊不敢忘初之厚德。』

"The prince has cast me aside without listening to me.

How can I show my loyalty?

But I long for silence and want to cut ties,
Although I dare not forget his past generosity."

Translation by Rémi Mathieu

According to Ye Xiaoxue, Xie concludes that it would be better for him to immerse himself in meditation.

* In the 19th century, Séraphin Couvreur, a Jesuit missionary, was the first major translator of the most important Chinese classics, including the *Shi jing*, which has been regularly reprinted.

Gravissant l'île solitaire au milieu du fleuve

登江中孤嶼詩

江 南 倦 歷 覽
江 北 曠 周 旋
懷 新 道 轉 迴
尋 異 景 不 延
亂 流 趨 正 絕
孤 嶼 媚 中 川
雲 日 相 輝 映
空 水 共 澄 鮮
表 靈 物 莫 賞
蘊 真 誰 為 傳
想 象 昆 山 姿
緬 邈 區 中 緣
始 信 安 期 術
得 盡 養 生 年

Lassé d'avoir si souvent visité le
sud du fleuve
J'explore en tous sens le vaste nord
du fleuve
En fondant l'espoir de découvrir
de nouvelles voies
Les paysages surprenants tardent
à advenir
Des courants contraires se précipi-
tent sur une paroi
Une île solitaire au beau milieu de
la rivière
Nuages et soleil se renvoient leur
éclat
L'air et l'eau partagent limpidité et
fraîcheur
Et personne pour admirer ces
merveilles
Non plus que témoigner des im-
mortels cachés
Dont on croit voir l'image dans les
monts Kunlun
Si loin, si loin de notre monde
Je commence à croire en l'art d'An
Qi
Pour nourrir ma vie jusqu'à son
terme.

Ascending the Solitary Isle in the River

Weary of frequent journeys
south of the river
I had long neglected the north-
ern shore
Longing for novelty, I search
new ways
Seeking marvels, I lost all track
of time
Through rushing currents, I
reached for the opposite shore
Where the Solitary Isle en-
chants in the river's heart
Clouds and sunlight glow in
mutual radiance
Sky and water merge in crystal-
line clarity
It reveals its spirit and yet none
admire it
Who will tell of the immortals
hidden here?
It calls to mind the majestic
peaks of Kunlun
And draws me far from the
mundanity of the world
Now I believe in Master Anqi's
techniques for achieving im-
mortality
Here, I may live out my years,
nurturing life to its natural end.

Some sinologists believed they had located this island, notably in the Wu River, near the present-day city of Wenzhou; but nothing is less certain, as the rivers and especially the streams of Zhejiang province contain numerous rocky islets in the middle of the current. On the other hand, the composition of the poem can only date from 423. A certain weariness overtakes Xie Lingyun during his travels when, suddenly, this island bathed in light appears. Immortals must reside there, and Xie is seized by the desire to “nourish his life” there. The surprise fills him with joy, then with bitterness at not having a friend with whom to share this emotion. In several poems, Xie explicitly reveals the succession of emotions that overwhelm him before he masters them with the help of quotations supporting his own meditations. It is no small merit of Ye Xiaoxue's commentary (cited in the bibliography) to restore this course of Xie's visions and emotions before any interpretation, however relevant and erudite.

Line 11: *Chu ci*, “Yuanyou,” “Distant Wanderings,” 5

『思舊故以想像兮』

“I think of old friends and imagine them”

Translation by Rémi Mathieu
The Kunlun Mountains, in the far northwest of China, were the residence of the Taoist immortals. Line 13: An Qi appears as the archetype of the reclusive Taoist devoted to the techniques of “nourishing life,” notably through herbs, mushrooms, and elixirs.