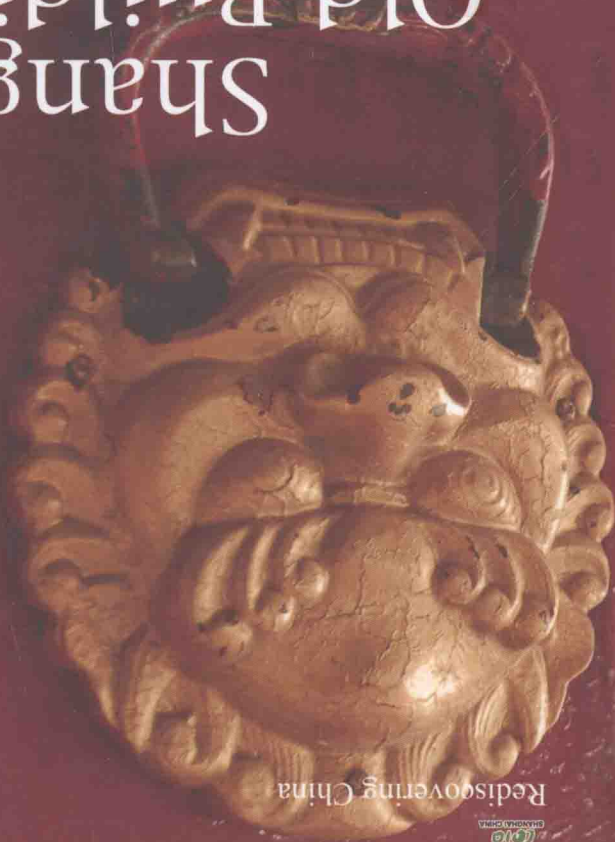


Written by Wu Yongfu
Translated by Zhang Ke

Shanghai Old Buildings



Rediscovering China



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Preface



Yingchuan Xiaozhu

As a cultural city, Shanghai is abundant with scholars in her long history: the literal brothers Lu Ji and Lu Yun in the Western Jin Dynasty; a calligraphist and painter Guan Daosheng in Yuan Dynasty; Scientist Xu Guangqi, Scholar Gui Youguang immigrating to and then teaching on Anting, Jiading, Artist of Songjiang Painting School, Dong Qichang, and his friend, a famous writer named Chen Jiru, also a friend of Xu Xiake, a Chinese Marco Polo in Ming Dynasty; the renowned “Seven Sages” including Qian Daxin, who compiled the history classic *Versions of Twenty-two Annals*, and his classmate Wang Chang in Qing Dynasty. It is enlightening to study their vestiges in Shanghai area to understand more about them.

Having researched for decades, Mr. Wu eventually published his photo album, through which we can enjoy the elegant buildings, though debris now, left by those scholars thus an eye-witness to their masters’ lives. For instance, Qianyan Tang, on the island in the streams of Liuhe River in Jiading, in which Qian Daxin wrote many books, ranging from prose, verse to historical study, naming after this library, a both simple and graceful house. In this album, one also finds some former residences belong to those celebrities like Chen Yun in Liantang Town, Qingpu, and Zhang Wentian in Jichang Town, Pudong, both of whom played key roles in Chinese revolutionary history.

Architecture is an environmental art form, which is closely related to human life. An esthetician in the nineteenth century, once said that art begins with architecture, for among the activities more or less of practical purposes, only architecture is elevated to artistic form. Every feature in a building illustrates the wisdom and esthetician values of the epoch, its structure, out looking, decorations and arrangements of windows and doors. This album, depicting the beauty of the East China cities and watery regions, combines the stately palaces with sweet homes. We can learn not only the history but elevate our hearts also from those former residences of scholars in history.

Mr. Wu has a deep affection for the scenes in Shanghai. He is the chief editor of a TV documentary *Lin Zexu in Shanghai*, and albums like *Poetic Scenery in Shanghai* and *Renowned Bridges in Shanghai*. He now has finished *The Renowned Houses of Ming and Qing Dynasties in Shanghai: Shanghai Old Buildings*. He made some field trips over the sites, visited the locals and offsprings of those scholars and celebrities, searching the traces of the ancient human activities all through the baking heat and chilling cold. His diligence would be rewarded by the readers ultimately.

(Lan Yun writes on the behalf of Wang Yuanhua)

Geueral Introduction



Jingye Tang

The old civil houses in Shanghai

Once called the exposition of buildings of the whole world in the early 20th Century, Shanghai possesses buildings of various styles and shapes: French castle, Renaissance courthouse, English village house, Norwegian or Spanish style, and so on. Here and there, you may encounter the red-tiled roofs of 1920s Shikumen, meaning a stone gate, an architecture logo of Shanghai, just as Siheyuan, meaning a yard surrounded by four buildings, the symbol of Chinese capital city of Beijing. After 1949, especially after opening policy adapted in 1978, Shanghai experienced a boom of new residential apartments and townhouses, which flourished across the city.

Shanghai is a cultural and historic port city, where many scholars subsisted,

where numerous celebrities congregated. A lot of buildings representing their times and local colors, embodying the profound cultural annotation are left as a cultural heritage. Let us begin from the old buildings in downtown.

Shanghai Old Buildings



House of Tao Changqing



The old city part: Spot of Xu vs. Half City of Pan

“Spot of Xu” is referred to Xu Guangqi, who was a scientist and a prime minister in Ming Dynasty. He became famous but refused to change his old living house, which was just a spot in an unnoticeable corner, now called Jiu Jianlou (nine room building) on Qiaojia Lu. “Half City of Pan” is referred to Pan Yunduan, an administrative minister in Sichuan Province in Ming Dynasty. He built a gigantic garden of almost 12 acres named Yuyuan Garden, meaning “pleasing the parents”, when he retired and went back home. The garden is so large that it was nicknamed “Half City of Pan”.

Yuyuan Garden now occupied about 5 acres, with about forty buildings of various functions and facades. Sansui Tang (three ears of wheat building), symbolizing the prosperity, guards the entrance of the whole Garden. Behind Sansui Tang, is the two storied building, whose ground floor is called Yangshan Tang, so called because of a 14-metre-high rockery mimicking a steep and vast mountain before it, and the second floor Juanyulou, meaning a building to enjoy the rain. Inside the Garden, there is a historic site named Dianchun Tang, which was the headquarter of Xiaodaohui Uprising, which was waged by a religious group to fight against the tyranny of Qing Dynasty rulers. Dianchun Tang's window frames are decorated with delicately carved patterns reflecting the dramatic events or protagonists. To the west of Dianchun Tang, there is a screen wall with designs of dragons hovering in the sky. Within the Garden, there is also a garden consisting of a pond, a pavilion and an elegant outdoor theatre, which is called No.1 ancient theatre in East China.

Not far from Yuyuan Garden, on Wutong Lu, is the former residence of Pan Yunduan, which was converted into a Catholic church in 1640, due to the declination of the family of Pan. It then was remodeled into a Shenjiang School(1748) and later Jingye School(1770). 1835 witnessed the provincial governor of Jiangsu, Lin Zexu, who later became the national hero to ban the opium in Guangzhou, carried out an official inspection in Shanghai. Lin Zexu was so fond of this place that he left a piece of calligraphic work praising the school “a seaside Confucius domain”. Years gone by, it still is a school nowadays with the reading voices echoing back and forth.

The former residence of Xu Guangqi, Jiujianlou (nine room building) is located on Qiaojia Lu near Xiao Dongmen. Facing the west, the building now is a two storied and seven roomed, and outrageously the two other rooms were destroyed by Japanese bombs during the World War II. The remnant part is just ordinarily house and cannot trace its original structure and arrangements with hundreds of years' erosion and remodeling. It is reported that inside the house there still are some remaining partition boards,

pillar bases, bucket arch and a well “with water still clean and wellhead still tidy.”

To the south east of Jiujianlou, under ramp bridge of Nanpu Bridge, there is also a memorial place for Xu Guangqi on Sangyuan Jie (Mulberry Street), where he once made some hand-on experiments about silkworms. After he passed away, his son Xu Ji “escorting the coffin to the south”, first stopped by the Mulberry House outside the south Gate of the City, then moved it to Tuwanshan in Xujiahui, now Nandan Park or Guangqi Park.