

江南回憶

Recollection of Jiangnan





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序

在現代的社會裏，交通愈來愈發達了。而人的遷移也似乎愈來愈頻繁了。有人說世界變小了。也有人說，四海一家了。的確，從交通工具到旅遊住宿，甚至城市裏的商店和建築，不論我們走到那裏，即使說不上是賓至如歸，至少也不會有多少的陌生。這是世界大同的進步？還是自我環境的消失？不論我們是怎麼去看它，在夜深人靜的時候，一種思鄉懷舊之情總會像穿越窗外街頭的車燈，閃爍浮現在時空的邊緣。畢竟生命的意義是延伸而不是遞換，生活的神韻是累積而不是換新。

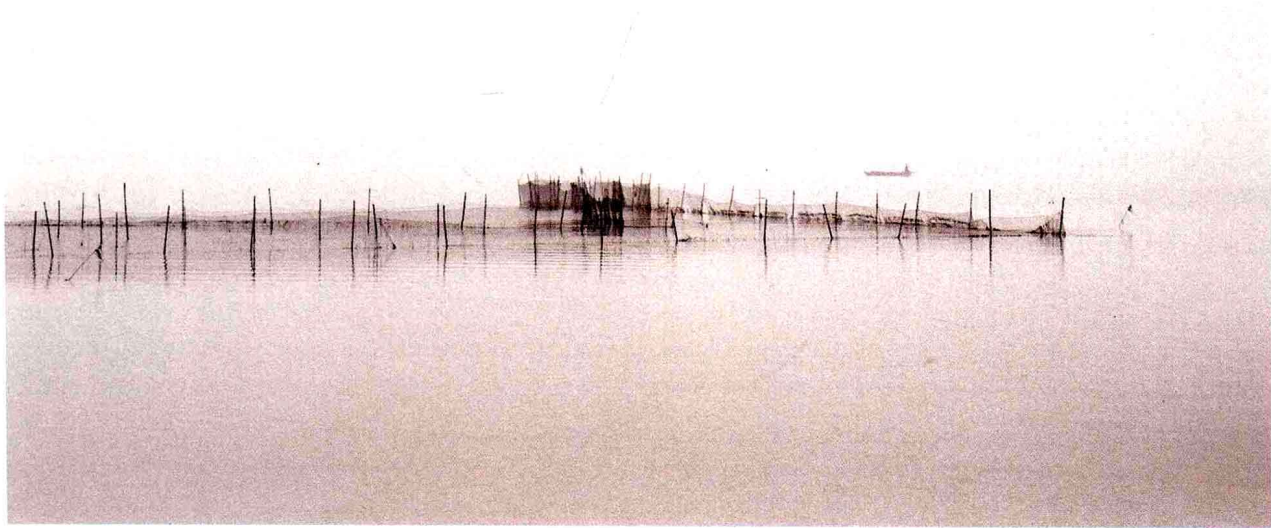
何威的“江南回憶”像色澤猶存的落葉，飄蕩徘徊在陣陣的秋風裏。也像水波不興的塘水，倒映出燦爛輝煌的秋色。帶給我的是一種探幽的樂趣，但也夾雜有幾分消逝的情惆。不論在他的照片還是文章裏，我也看到他在多方面興趣的融合。我找到了電影的戲劇性和攝影的發現性；既有文學修養上成熟所帶來的恬淡和細膩，也有書法中他所稱道的意境和個性。

在中國廣大的領域中，江南不僅是一個地區，也是一種文化。而江南的文化，因為這個地區經濟發展和人才輩出所帶來的影響，幾乎成為中國文化的象徵。也正因為江南文化對大家來說，過分的熟悉，任何描述江南的嘗試，都是一個挑戰。人們對於江南幾乎都有他們自己的一份認識和體會。如果差距太大了，就很難會被大家接受；但如果只是記錄大家都已經看到的，那不單失去了新鮮感，還說不定會引發陳腔濫調的批評。在何威的“江南回憶”裏，他的文字描述有一種“發生在昨天”的清晰和逼真。在娓娓道來的訴說中，流露出他個人的觀察和情感。而從他的攝影作品，我可以感受到他對攝影這個媒體的掌握，發揮了攝影作品所能帶來的深度。它們是視覺的文學，無言的散文。

從何威眼裏的江南，也讓我想起德國給我帶來的啟發。當我在70年代去那裏遊覽的時候，一部分受到二次大戰所破壞的文化古跡，還正被積極地修復中。他們的這份努力我深深地感到，當一個民族不能重視自己的文化遺產和民族傳統，她的一部分生命也就隨著消失在歷史的塵埃裏了。

李元

2005.7.30. 於加利福尼亞州核桃溪鎮



Preface

The mobility of modern societies seems to have shrunk the physical world. People travel frequently and an ubiquitous life-style emerges. Uniformity seems to have settled on the communities around the world, from transportation to hotels and from architecture to commerce. No matter where we go, everything seems vaguely familiar. Is this the fruit of globalization, or a sign of identity lost? Regardless of how we feel about it, a longing for nostalgia creeps into our consciousness like the flashing tail-lights of a passing vehicle outside the window. After all, most of us view life as a continuum. We add pleasures to our lives but never discard the memories of yesterday for the sake of what is coming tomorrow.

In Ho Wai's *Recollections of Jiangnan*, his narratives are like fallen leaves circling in the wind with the undiminished brilliant colors of autumn. They also shine like reflections on the water, vivid and yet elusive. They bring me the pleasure of exploring the past anew and the sad realization of its irretrievability. At the same time, I am impressed by his ability to integrate the unique vision of a photographer, the drama in the hands of a movie maker, the articulate and unhurried manner of a seasoned writer, and the expressive style of a calligrapher.

In the vast land of China, Jiangnan is not only a region but also represents a culture. The dominance of its economy and the literary talents the region has produced has made Jiangnan, in the view of many, quintessentially "Chinese". This unique distinction poses a challenge to any book produced on this region. Anything said about it must be simultaneously recognizable and yet without falling into cliché. He Wei succeeded with his intimate narratives and his command of photography. His pictures are like literature without words, a unique expression of sensitivity and contemplation.

Jiangnan, seen through Ho Wai's eyes, also brings back the feeling I had when I visited Germany in the 70s when a major effort was undertaken there to restore buildings of historical importance bombed out during World War II. I came to realize that if a nation does not pay attention to its cultural heritage and traditions, a part of its spiritual life will die with their disappearance.

Li, Yuan

2005.7.30. in Walnut Creek, California, USA



水

我喜歡江南的其中一個原因是因為我喜歡水，而喜歡水的一個原因是因為它常有個清澈晶瑩的倒影，所以低著頭也一樣能看到那藍色的天、古樸的建築、翠綠的柳樹……，感覺像是在看一幅畫卷，真真假假的讓人迷惑不已。

從這畫卷中能看到的其實更多：幽幽地水草在水中招搖、漂落的樹葉在眼前緩緩滑過，偶爾泛起的陣陣漣漪使得那天、那建築、那柳樹充滿了生命的動感，變得奇幻且有詩意；天寒地凍的時候也會披上朦朧白紗，把一切都收藏起來；在你冷不防之際，蕩出一葉輕舟，讓你驚覺原來對世界的觀察是如此的大意。

記憶就是哪水，其中有你的現實，亦有你的迷惑。它帶著你的憐愛緩緩滑過你的生命，亦在潛意識裏誘惑著你；它的陣陣漣漪使你肯定了你的生命本源，也讓你體驗生活的詩意。它有時雖然也模糊不清，但卻又會冷不防的讓你如夢初醒……。

只有在平靜之際，才能看清那一幕幕的記憶，可當你一慌張，便如攪亂了一池清靜，留下的就只有那零零散散的碎影了。



Water

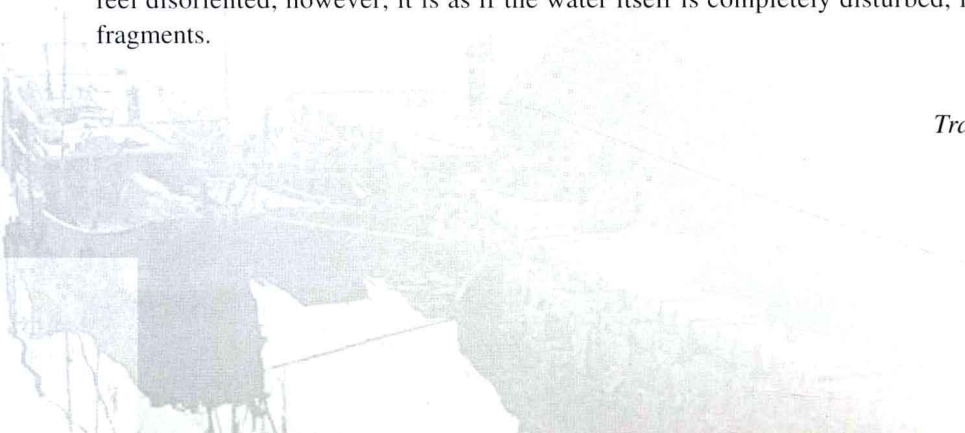
One of the reasons why I am so fond of the Jiangnan is my love of water. And my attraction to water lies in its unique capacity to present you with a crystal-clear reflection. You can look down instead of up and still see a perfect blue sky, architectural images of primitive simplicity, green willow trees....., as if you were scrolling through a series of pictures that leave you disoriented, hovering somewhere between the realms of reality and illusion.

And the scroll reveals so much more: the gentle swaying of plants beneath the surface, falling leaves floating gently by, an occasional ripple that will endow the sky, the buildings and the willow trees with the power of life, a mesmerizing scene as poetic as it is dynamic. In winter when the ground freezes over, the scroll will throw on an opaque veil to obscure the trembling images. Sometimes, quite unexpectedly, a light boat will swing out and startle you, as if to scold you for allowing yourself this indulgent distraction from reality.

Memories flow through these waters, carrying not only the reality before you but also the mysteries of your past. Carrying your love along with it, the water slowly streams across your life, luring your subconscious to the surface as it flows. The spells of ripples affirm to you the source of life, bringing a clearer insight into its poetic flavor. The image may sometimes be blurred, but every now and then, without warning, there is a sense of having just awoken from a vivid dream.....

When the scroll is still and calm, you can see more clearly those scenes of recollection one after the other. When you feel disoriented, however, it is as if the water itself is completely disturbed, leaving you with a pool of scattered fragments.

Translation by Simon Fung of Shanghai





小巷

天剛微亮，巷子裏已開始有人走動了，嘈嚷的洗滌馬桶的聲音開始驟然響起，揭開一天的起始。

在晨曦漸露端倪的霞暉裏，各家的煤爐開始生火了，一縷縷的炊煙在小巷裏彌散開去……。更多的人影在巷子裏閃過，那是挎著竹籃去買菜的人們。

一兩個背書包的身影開始蹦蹦跳跳的出現在小巷裏，漸漸的，孩子們的喧嘩聲將記憶與現實扯在了一起，像清晨河邊的洗滌，擾亂了原本清靜的河水，伸延的漪漣將眼前的趣致的倒影撕成零零碎碎的片段。行色匆匆的大人們那急促的腳步聲和沉重自行車身顛簸的的砰砰之聲也開始在顛簸的小巷石路響起，這是小巷一日中的高潮。之後，小巷裏又漸漸回復平靜，倒影又再顯現，記憶亦緩緩地復原……。

在那片昔日唏噓之中也有我的一份竊竊私語，那些蹦跳的身影裏也有我小小的背影。父親出門、回家時那習慣性清嗓子的咳嗽聲讓我老遠也能判斷出他的行蹤位置；母親自行車上的清脆小鈴，絲毫不難讓我從千輛自行車上的鈴聲中分辨出來……。

站在小巷前，那熟悉的景色、習以為常的喧嚷，又帶我回到了那懷戀的童年。其中，也還有那細雨綿綿的季節和寒意深深的歲月……。



Little Lane

The crack of dawn; people had just started moving about in the lane. All at once the sound of bedroom stools being washed down broke out, announcing the beginning of a fresh new day.

At the first faint rays of the morning sunlight, each household was lighting a fire in the coal stove, and kitchen smoke, curling up and spreading, drifted through the lane... More and more figures flashed by as people carrying baskets made their way briskly to the market to buy food.

A small figure or two, each carrying a schoolbag, appeared jumping and skipping along the lane. Gradually, the din of the children fused memory and reality, just as the early morning wash at the river disturbs the quiet and tranquil water, extending ripples that transform the hypnotic reflection into broken fragments. Then the cobbled street began to echo with the sound of the grown-ups' hasty footsteps and the rattle of heavily laden bicycles. Rush hour had arrived in the residential lane. Soon the hubbub gradually subsided; the reflection reappeared, and memory was restored...

Amid the fracas I could hear my own voice whispering, and among those young figures I saw my own image from behind. I could always tell my father's whereabouts by the sound of his coughing to clear his throat as he came and went. Similarly, I could always distinguish the clear tone of my mother's bicycle bell from a thousand other bells.....

Now as I stand in front of that lane, the familiar scenes and sounds take me back to my cherished boyhood once again; to the seasons of continuous drizzle and the times of never-ending chill.

Translation by Simon Fung of Shanghai