

# Random Recollections of the Cow Shed

外语教学与研究出版社  
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[illegible]

博雅  
名家名作  
精选集

# Random Recollections of the Cow Shed

汉英对照

## 牛棚杂忆

季羡林 著 马 尚 译

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## “博雅双语名家名作”出版说明

1840年鸦片战争以降，在深重的民族危机面前，中华民族精英“放眼世界”，向世界寻求古老中国走向现代、走向世界的灵丹妙药，涌现出一大批中国主题的经典著述。我们今天阅读这些中文著述的时候，仍然深为字里行间所蕴藏的缜密的考据、深刻的学理、世界的视野和济世的情怀所感动，但往往会忽略：这些著述最初是用英文写就，我们耳熟能详的中文文本是原初英文文本的译本，这些英文作品在海外学术界和文化界同样享有崇高的声誉。

比如，林语堂的 *My Country and My People*（《吾国与吾民》）以幽默风趣的笔调和睿智流畅的语言，将中国人的道德精神、生活情趣和中国社会文化的方方面面娓娓道来，在美国引起巨大反响——林语堂也以其中国主题系列作品赢得世界文坛的尊重，并获得诺贝尔文学奖的提名。再比如，梁思成在抗战的烽火中写就的英文版《图像中国建筑史》文稿（*A Pictorial History of Chinese Architecture*），经其挚友费慰梅女士（Wilma C. Fairbank）等人多年的奔走和努力，于1984年由麻省理工学院出版社（MIT Press）出版，并获得美国出版联合会颁发的“专业暨学术书籍金奖”。又比如，1939年，费孝通在伦敦政治经济学院的博士论文以 *Peasant Life in China—A Field Study of Country Life in the Yangtze Valley* 为名在英国劳特利奇书局（Routledge）出版，后以《江村经济》作为中译本书名——《江村经济》使得靠桑蚕为生的“开弦弓村”获得了世界性的声誉，成为国际社会学界研究中国农村的首选之地。

此外，一些中国主题的经典人文社科作品经海外汉学家和中国学者的如椽译笔，在英语世界也深受读者喜爱。比如，艾恺（Guy S. Alitto）将他1980年用中文访问梁漱溟的《这个世界会好吗——梁漱溟晚年口述》一书译成英文（*Has Man a Future?—Dialogues with the Last Confucian*），备受海内外读者关注；

此类作品还有徐中约英译的梁启超著作《清代学术概论》(*Intellectual Trends in the Ch'ing Period*)、狄百瑞(W. T. de Bary)英译的黄宗羲著作《明夷待访录》(*Waiting for the Dawn: A Plan for the Prince*),等等。

有鉴于此,外语教学与研究出版社推出“博雅双语名家名作”系列。

博雅,乃是该系列的出版立意。博雅教育(Liberal Education)早在古希腊时代就得以提倡,旨在培养具有广博知识和优雅气质的人,提高人文素质,培养健康人格,中国儒家六艺“礼、乐、射、御、书、数”亦有此功用。

双语,乃是该系列的出版形式。英汉双语对照的形式,既同时满足了英语学习者和汉语学习者通过阅读中国主题博雅读物提高英语和汉语能力的需求,又以中英双语思维、构架和写作的形式予后世学人以启迪——维特根斯坦有云:“语言的边界,乃是世界的边界”,诚哉斯言。

名家,乃是该系列的作者群体。涵盖文学、史学、哲学、政治学、经济学、考古学、人类学、建筑学等领域,皆海内外名家一时之选。

名作,乃是该系列的人选标准。系列中的各部作品都是经过时间的积淀、市场的检验和读者的鉴别而呈现的经典,正如卡尔维诺对“经典”的定义:经典并非你正在读的书,而是你正在重读的书。

胡适在《新思潮的意义》(1919年12月1日,《新青年》第7卷第1号)一文中提出了“研究问题、输入学理、整理国故、再造文明”的范式。秉着“记载人类文明、沟通世界文化”的出版理念,我们推出“博雅双语名家名作”系列,既希望能够在中国人创作的和以中国为主题的博雅英文文献领域“整理国故”,亦希望在和平发展、改革开放的新时代为“再造文明”、为“向世界说明中国”略尽绵薄之力。

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## My Wishes

In blood the pages of this book were soaked red,  
And in tears I dipped my pen to write.  
But able to complete it before my demise,  
I found it the highest joy of my life,  
The best gift to the offspring I could bequeath.  
Let it come into being,  
Radiating all my blessings.  
No hatred and revenge it spreads,  
But a mirror it should look like,  
Evil and virtue, ugliness and beauty all reflected  
And despair and hope also to be sighted.  
It is bringing my loyalty and sincerity  
To our great country and people far and wide.

## 祝 词

这一本小书是用血换来的，  
是和泪写成的。  
我能够活着把它写出来，  
是我毕生的最大幸福，  
是我留给后代的最佳礼品。  
愿它带着我的祝福  
走向人间吧。  
它带去的不是仇恨和报复，  
而是一面镜子，  
从中可以照见恶和善，丑和美，  
照见绝望和希望。  
它带去的是对我们伟大祖国和人民的一片赤诚。

# INTRODUCTION

When I first read *Random Recollections of the Cow Shed* thirteen years ago, I was stunned by its haunting depictions of brutality, torment, injustice and agony. That was in 1998, a few years after I finished my graduate program in the U.S. and started to teach English at Beida or Peking University. I immediately expressed my desire to translate it from Chinese into English. Dr. Ji Xianlin, retired and living in his Langrunyuan home at Peking University, called me one afternoon in my Yandongyuan home.<sup>1</sup> He told me that seventy-two faculty members of Peking University were persecuted to death during the Cultural Revolution. "Chapter 8: On the Edge of 'Taking My Own Life Against the People'" of his book catches one of the heart-wrenching moments. But that death ratio still shocked me, given the rough figures of 1,000 faculty members and 11,000 students of the university at that time. I told him that my grandfather did not survive the disaster. He was formerly an undergraduate physics major at Peking University from 1916-1921, the period of the May 4th Movement, and went on for graduate study at the University of Leeds, U.K., on a competitive state-funded student program. Later he returned to teach as professor of physics and electrical engineering and department head at Hebei University. He committed suicide in early September, 1966, the following day after our home, where I grew up and lived with him, was raided and confiscated by the Red Guards. Dr. Ji expressed his compassion and regret. Later he granted my request with his authorization for my translation. Today my years of effort has brought down the curtain on the translation. It is regretful that Dr. Ji did not live to see the day. I wish my translation could be dedicated

to the memory of Dr. Ji and my grandfather for their commitment to sciences and seeking truth.

In the reading of *Random Recollections of the Cow Shed*, I think a few points deserve notice in terms of the significance of its writing and publication, a unique arrangement of the materials, the author's relentless lashing of his persecutors, a contrast between his humanistic concern with his fellow Cow Shed victims and an absence of account for his family, and the breezing literary style.

First, the significance of the book's writing and publication lies in its courageous and substantial recounting of the victimization of Chinese intellectuals at the institution of higher education during the Cultural Revolution. Dr. Ji started to write this memoir in 1992 and published it in 1998. Before that he had "waited twelve years" as he states in his "Preface," keeping hoping that many other Cow Shed inmates across the country like him, with some of the most horrifying experiences, would write and publish on their suffering. But his hope was shattered as no one had written anything in recounting his or her stories of that history. He decided to pick up his pen and write his own. The reason that no one had written anything even though almost two decades had passed since the end of the ten-year turmoil is that some of the persecutors, instead of being brought to justice, had come to power at that time, as the author states in his book. Many victims were refrained from airing their mind and writing. However, one writer, Ba Jin, a well-known, Shanghai-based freelance literary writer, published his *Random Thoughts* in 1978. In this collection of essays, Ba Jin recounts his suffering in the Cultural Revolution and reveals his dull-mindedness and cowardice in the face of savageness and injustice. In comparison, Dr. Ji's memoir has produced the first detailed narration of this kind of experience from a professor's perspective of the most prestigious and politically clamped university



in modern China. His writing represents the historical moments and displays courage and a sense of duty.

Second, the arrangement of the materials of the book is unique for its free flow of thoughts and careful classification of the periods. Though the book is called “random recollections,” the author blends recalls with reflections and gives an unrestrained release of rationale and emotion. The “Preface” and chapters 20-21 provide compelling accounts of the author’s Cow Shed life and reexamine his reactions. The accounts of his Cultural Revolution experience are clearly divided into three sections: his life before being detained in the Cow Shed (chapters 1-11), his life in the Cow Shed (chapters 12-17), and his life after being released from the Cow Shed (chapters 18-19). “The Autobiography of Ji Xianlin,” offers a brief look at the author’s life in his early and later years. The book can be read as a memoir with a focus on the author’s personal experience in the Cultural Revolution against the backdrop of collisions between social changes and individual aspirations in twentieth-century China.

Third, the author’s relentless lashing on his persecutors unveils the heart of darkness and sings an ode to the triumph of justice. His narration truly represents the willful trampling of laws, savage torment, blatantly lying, and unashamed ungratefulness, such as the raiding of his home, repeated torture sessions, inhumane conditions of the Cow Shed, fabricated big-character-poster accusations and ridiculous speeches at the session of denouncement, his favorite student turning into a ferocious tormentor, etc. The author laments at places that the legacy of Chinese history and culture only lends itself to a disguised brutality, as he depicts the concoctions and brush arts of big-character posters, and the laying out of the “Regulations for Reform Persons” and the “evening forewarning speech” in the Cow Shed. His frequent castigating of the “Old Dowager”

can hardly be deemed as personal. All his accounts raise a question, "Why can young students and friendly colleagues turn overnight into fierce, treacherous, bloodthirsty factionalists and foes?" But the triumph of justice is something to be celebrated as he was restored to work and power in the later years of the upheaval. Though he frankly states he is not vengeful, the tone strikes a clear note that the human folly of ignorance and selfishness is lethal and an infliction of injustice is ephemeral.

Fourth, the reader may also be impressed by a contrast in the memoir between the author's compassion for others and an odd absence of narration about his own family. The author tells stories with understanding and sympathy about the leading figures of the university at the torture session, such as Lu Ping and Peng Peiyun, Professor Wang of history and Party general secretary Cheng of the Department of Chinese who committed suicide, and the faculty and students perishing in the Cow Shed, such as the professor from the library, the professor of law, the female teacher from the Department of Eastern Languages, Party general secretary of the Department of Biology, the female teacher from the affiliated primary school, the "rightist" student, and the professor of physics. Indebtedness is not forgotten as he mentions his Cow Shed fellow Ma Shiyi who offered him a cart ride on his painful walk to the clinic for his swollen testes; the same gratitude is expressed to his "reactionary" fellows Zhang Xueshu and Wang Enyong who supported him back home after the university torture session on May 4, 1968 and to a few workers who humanitarily treated him, the author spares no space in expressing his appreciation.

However, the memoir feels short of narrating his own family. A scanty account is given to his only two family members, his wife and aunt, and no further information is found in his "Autobiography" either. The author

got married during his college period at Tsinghua University from 1930 to 1934 when in his early twenties. His wife, Peng Dehua, was from his home village, four years his senior and illiterate. She bore him one girl, Ji Wanru, and one boy, Ji Cheng. But the author did not return home and see them very often at that time. The following ten years continued to see a split family when the author went to Germany for graduate study and was stranded there due to the Second World War before returning to Beijing in 1946. But his reunification with his wife did not come until 1962 when she moved to Beijing to join him. His son later came to study Russian in Beijing and worked in China's Academy of Sciences. It was said that the author was originally disappointed with his marriage. It might be due to a family marriage intervention, or the discrepancy in education, or a difference of national character and writing style. However, his reservation in writing and sharing information about his family, particularly his children, during the Cultural Revolution has left some food for thought with the reader, especially one from the West. In front of us is a personality with a glittering integrity and career with an incomplete family life.

Finally, *Random Recollections of the Cow Shed* is written in a breezy, matter-of-fact manner. His command of the language with a solid grounding in both Western and Chinese classics is remarkable. His doctorate is in Hindu study with focuses on Sanskrit, Balinese, the language of Tukhara, Russian, Slavic and Arabic. He is a prolific essayist and translator, particularly with his work *A Trace of Cultural Exchange: A Chinese History of Cane Sugar* and translation of the Hindu epic *Ramayana*. The writing of his memoir certainly reflects this established and assured style, unrestrained, informal, and studded with classical references, historical anecdotes, poetic lines, quotations, bitter jokes, mocks, and self-mockeries. The writing is colloquially rippling and

graphically substantial. A Western reader may find awkward repetition and modesty at places in the book such as his reassuring of refusing to revenge and repeated stating of his ordinary social status and academic lack of luster. Modesty might be an ethnic trait of the East. But the political environment plays a major role that self-depreciation was encouraged or even required in the society when the Cultural Revolution was over. In the 1990s the country was still grappling with the ideological residues of the past political moments, when the author wrote the book. The author's cautious steps in writing could be understood.

During the Cultural Revolution the Cow Shed was a household word in China. Those, locked up in Cow Sheds, guarded quarters for torture and forced physical labor, joined the dubbed herd of "cattle, ghost, snake and demon," most of them government officials, reputed intellectuals and celebrities. Dr. Ji wrote a memoir in his late years of his suffering during the national political and social tsunami. His courage, frankness and dedication to seeking truth helped produce this book, as "a mirror" in his words, so that a lesson should be learned and the "tuition" will not be paid in vain. Today rising generations of youth are privileged with chic products of the economic reform, from Apple computers to HDTV, from the Internet to smart phones, Facebook and Twitter. But Dr. Ji's book will remain readable if we believe that in the equation of life human nature is a constant and time and place are variables.

In translating the book, I tried to accommodate the needs of both Chinese and Western readers. I did my best to put in clear, contemporary and edited American English. The notes I supply may appear tedious at places to a Chinese reader but would be helpful to a Western one.

I want to thank Dr. Deanna Robinson, emeritus professor of journalism from the University of Oregon for her proofreading of chapters 9-20 of the draft and valuable suggestions for revision. My

thanks also go to Foreign Language Teaching and Research Press editors Duan Huixiang and Yi Lu for their editing and checking of the complete manuscript to eliminate many errors. Without these helps and contributions the publication of this work would not have been possible.

All the errors and lapses will remain to be mine.

*Perry W. Ma*

*September 1, 2012*

## PREFACE

Why did *Random Recollections of the Cow Shed* not appear until 1998, though it was written six years earlier? It looks a little unusual with respect to a normal publication process. The reader may be curious about the reason that caused the delay.

This curiosity is truly understandable. Admittedly there is indeed a reason. The reason is not foggy. It is nothing but a selfish concern that can be thought of as “gauging the heart of a gentleman with a small man’s mean measure.”<sup>1</sup> I was already struck down on the ground by the “young revolutionaries,” some of them not young at all, with one thousand feet stamped on my body and never allowed to be a man of his own fate.<sup>2</sup> But the wheel has turned in full circle and that part of nature is irresistible. After that catastrophe was over I have not only survived and stood up to helm my boat of life again but I have been flying high in my career and government tenure, snatching one position after another and sending shivers down the spines of those “young revolutionaries.” If I had been vengeful, I would have been able to work out one thousand ways of punishment, as easily as blowing off dust, just to settle the score.

But I’ve not done anything of this kind. I’ve not retaliated for the wrong I had received, given someone tight shoes to wear and wielding a club to hit someone. Am I a respectful, benevolent and forgiving gentleman? No, I am not in the least. I love and hate. I can be envious and vengeful. I am not more forgiving than anyone else. But whenever the idea of revenge arises in my mind, I believe that, during that period, everyone, no matter what ideological faction or affiliation he or she had, was metamorphosed into a non-human. Today one person may call another “swine.” I think that is an insult to cattle. A wild beast eats humans because it is hungry. But it does not lie, nor is it atrocious. Never does it first elaborate on the *raison d’être* of carnivorousness, profusely



citing sources and documenting, before opening its mouth and devouring a human. But humans are different. Here I am using a term “non-human” to refer to a particular group of people instead of cattle. At one time even when I was flogged to death, the skin torn and the flesh gaping with the whole body dripping with blood, my faith in the correctness of the “Cultural Revolution” scarcely waned. How could I have pointed my finger to someone for his or her fault? The tormentor and the victim are

## 自序

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《牛棚杂忆》写于1992年，为什么时隔六年，到了现在1998年才拿出来出版。这有点违反了写书的常规。读者会怀疑，其中必有个说法。

读者的怀疑是对的，其中确有一个说法，而这个说法并不神秘，它仅仅出于个人的“以小人之心度君子之腹”的一点私心而已。我本来已经被“革命”小将——其实并不一定都小——在身上踏上了一千只脚，永世不得翻身了。可否极泰来，人间正道，浩劫一过，我不但翻身起来，而且飞黄腾达，“官”运亨通，颇让一些痛打过我、折磨过我的小将们胆战心惊。如果我真想报复的话，我会有一千种手段，得心应手，不费吹灰之力，就能够进行报复的。

可是我并没有这样做，我对任何人都没有打击、报复，穿小鞋，耍大棒。难道我是一个了不起的、宽容大度的正人君子吗？否，否，决不是的。我有爱，有恨，会妒忌，想报复，我的宽容心肠不比任何人高。可是，一动报复之念，我立即想到，在当时那种情况下，那种气氛中，每个人，不管他是哪一个山头，哪一个派别，都像喝了迷魂汤一样，异化为非人。现在人们有时候骂人为“畜生”，我觉得这是对畜生的污蔑。畜生吃人，因为它饿。它不会说谎，不会耍刁，决不会先讲上一大篇必须吃人的道理，旁征博引，洋洋洒洒，然后才张嘴吃人。而人则不然。我这里所谓“非人”，决不是指畜生，只称他为“非人”而已。我自己在被打得“一佛出世，二佛升天”的时候还虔信“文化大革命”的正确性，我焉敢苛求于别人呢？打人者和被打者，同是被害者，只是所处的

both victimized. They differ only in the position they each hold. Because of these thoughts I have not revenged myself.

But this explanation only shows one facade of my inner world. I also have the heart of selfishness.

Those people, who went through the "Cultural Revolution," know very well that it was a time when factional clashes ran rampant. Each of the institutions, schools, government offices, plants, enterprises, and even some military units, split into two combating factions, each claiming itself as "the most leftist" and "being extremely conceited." From today's point of view they all committed beating, smashing, looting and even homicide and arson. Two birds of one feather, they are no better than one another. Today if a debate had been ignited on who was right and who was wrong it would have looked senseless. But at that time there was something called "factional tendency," which was not tangible and visible. It was at once baseless and illogical but was treacherous and malicious with no rationale at all. If you happened to get hooked on it you would behave as if you were bewitched by sorcery and consequently dismantled your family, an otherwise lovely, closely knitted family miserably split into two factions. This clash might end up in a divorce, or a disaccord between a father and his son, or a feud between brothers, as endless brawls dragged on each day. I have read a lot in the last eighty years, but never heard of this kind of mindset. It truly opens up a new area of research for sociological and psychological scholars.

Of course, I was no exception, nor was I less fervent on the factional tendency. But to my mind I obtained my factional tendency at the risk of losing my life, something that was not an easy haul. When the Revolution was first rolled out, I was a department head at Beida and did not qualify for joining "the revolutionary masses" in making revolution. "Making revolution is nothing wrong, and making havoc is justified," the chant resounded across the country. But it had nothing to do with me. In the beginning I was merely one of the targets in "making the revolution" and

“making havoc.” In the past, before the founding of new China, I hated politics the most and had no connection with the Kuomintang (KMT) on any level, thus steering clear of political charges.<sup>3</sup> Now it was only natural and reasonable that I was labeled as a “capitalist roader” and an “influential counter-revolutionary scholar.”<sup>4</sup> After the two gusts lashed over, I retrieved my original shape, a free man again who could submerge among revolutionary masses and pass myself for one of them.

地位不同而已。就由于这些想法，我才没有进行报复。

但是，这只是冠冕堂皇的一面，这还不是一切，还有我私人的一面。

了解“十年浩劫”的人们都知道，当年打派仗的时候，所有的学校、机关、工厂、企业，甚至某一些部队，都分成了对立的两派，每一派都是“唯我独左”、“唯我独尊”。现在看起来两派都搞打、砸、抢，甚至杀人、放火，都是一丘之貉，谁也不比谁强。现在再来讨论或者辩论谁是谁非，实在毫无意义。可是在当时，有一种叫做“派性”的东西，摸不着，看不见，既无根据，又无理由，却是阴狠、毒辣，一点理性也没有。谁要是中了它，就像是中了邪一样，一个原来是亲爱和睦好端端的家庭，如果不幸而分属两派，则夫妇离婚者有之，父子反目者有之，至少也是“兄弟阋于墙”，天天在家里吵架。我读书七八十年，在古今中外的书中还从未发现过这种心理状况，实在很值得社会学家和心理学家认真探究。

我自己也并非例外。我的派性也并非不严重。但是，我自己认为，我的派性来之不易，是拼着性命换来的。运动一开始，作为一系之主，我是没有资格同“革命群众”一起参加闹革命的。“革命无罪，造反有理”，这呼声响彻神州大地，与我却无任何正面的关系，最初我是处在“革命”和“造反”的对象的地位上的。但是，解放前，我最厌恶政治，同国民党没有任何沾连。大罪名加不到我头上来。被打成“走资派”和“资产阶级反动学术权威”，是应有之义，不可避免的。这两阵狂风一过，我又恢复了原形，成了自由民，可以混迹于革命群众之中了。