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沈从文 著

杨宪益 戴乃迭 译



湘西散记

Recollections of West Hunan

Shen Congwen

双语插图本

湖南文艺出版社
湖南长沙
410006

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图书在版编目(CIP)数据

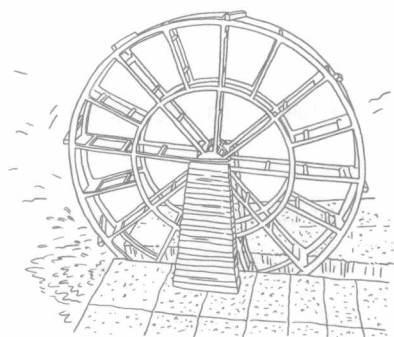
湘西散记:英汉对照/沈从文著;杨宪益,戴乃迭译.
—南京:译林出版社,2009.7
(新课标双语文库)
ISBN 978-7-5447-0930-9

I. 湘… II. ①沈… ②杨… ③戴… III. ①英语-汉语-对照
读物 ②散文-作品集-中国-现代 IV. H319.4:I

中国版本图书馆CIP数据核字 (2009) 第067721号

书 名	湘西散记
作 者	沈从文
译 者	杨宪益 戴乃迭
插 图	王 剑
责任编辑	田 智 吴莹莹
出版发行	凤凰出版传媒集团 译林出版社(南京市湖南路1号 210009)
电子信箱	yilin@yilin.com
网 址	http://www.yilin.com
集团网址	凤凰出版传媒网 http://www.ppm.cn
印 刷	南京通达彩印有限公司
开 本	652×960 毫米 1/16
印 张	19.50
插 页	2
版 次	2009年7月第1版 2009年7月第1次印刷
书 号	ISBN 978-7-5447-0930-9
定 价	20.00 元

译林版图书若有印装错误可向承印厂调换



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■ Author's Preface

This volume of my early essays comprises eleven chosen from four collections written between 1932 and 1937, a time when I was maturing as a writer and was at the height of my powers.

The first section comes from the first two chapters of my autobiography completed between the summer and autumn of 1932. I was then teaching composition in the Chinese Department of Qingdao University in Shandong. I lived in a small, newly repaired bungalow at the corner of Fushan Road, between the college and the park. In the triangular courtyard were flowering plums clipped into the shape of mushrooms, with a profusion of tiny white blossoms emitting a faint fragrance. Only a few hundred yards away at the end of the park was the beach. From my window I could watch the sea changing colour as the sky brightened or clouded—the clouds there were often light violet or pale green, unlike any I had seen elsewhere. As the term had not begun, I spent my days working or wandering through the hills some distance from the seaside; but the wider view there made the sea appear closer than it was. At night I seldom slept for more than three hours. Though the life was lonely I did not find it irksome, as I felt my vital forces burgeoning, waiting to flower and be put to use. In such conditions, I finished my autobiography within three weeks, and without waiting to make another copy sent the manuscript straight off to my Shanghai publisher. The first section deals with my life as a mischievous schoolboy. Judged by conventional standards, all I learned was how to play truant; but as I see it, I was trying to find ways to dodge the feudal educational system designed to turn me

■ 作者序

戴乃迭先生译的这十一篇作品，是从我的四个不同性质集子中选出的。这四个集子多完成于一九三二到一九三七几年间。正是我学习用笔比较成熟，也是我一生生命力最旺盛的那几年。

第一部分取自我的《从文自传》前二章。全书完成于一九三二年夏秋间。当时我正在山东青岛大学中文系教散文习作，住处恰在公园和学校之间福山路口，一座新经修理的小小楼房里。三角形院子中有三五簇珍珠梅，剪伐成蘑菇状的叶端分布一串串小白花，开放得十分茂盛，且散发一种淡淡清香。公园尽头便是海边，距离不过二里路远近。从窗口可望见明朗阳光下随时变换颜色的海面 and 天上云影（云彩且常呈粉紫色或淡绿色，为一生所仅见）。当时学校还未开课，我整天不是工作就是向附近山头随意走去。山离海较远，由于视界广阔，感觉上反而近些。夜里至多睡眠三小时。生活虽然极端寂寞，可并不觉得难堪，反而意识到生命在生长中、成熟中，孕育着一种充沛能量，待开发，待使用。就在这么一种情形下，用了三个星期时间《自传》便已完成，不再重抄，径寄上海付印。前一部分主要写我在私塾、小学时一段顽童生活。用世俗眼光

为保持作品原貌，本书在个别词语用字方面不加改动，特此说明。——编者

into a “careerist”, and to escape into the new, fresher world of Nature, in which by making full use of my senses I could have a different type of education. Of course my family and school did not recognize my method of self-education, and thought me disobedient, lazy and hopeless. From my point of view, the future they had mapped out for me was a dead end. So while still a boy I left home and went out to a totally strange society to make a living. For five years I received a rigorous education along the thousand *li* of the Yuan River Valley, living from hand to mouth as a poor vagrant and meeting with some fantastic experiences. I saw hundreds of my fellow countrymen and friends die futile deaths, and was lucky to come through alive myself. But instead of being disheartened and losing faith in life, I felt I had read a big book with immensely rich contents which increased my useful knowledge and taught me the true significance of life, convincing me of the road I ought to take. Under no circumstances would I grow decadent when life seemed without hope, nor would I preen myself on some minor achievement. This education and experience encouraged me to come to Beijing empty-handed when I was twenty, to read a new, larger book; it also fired my childish imagination with the ambition to achieve something more worthwhile after ten or twenty years of additional study. In this way I made it my principle to act on my own judgement, never relying on favours granted by others or trusting to luck, nor affected by temporary ups and downs in my work. I went on studying like this for twenty-five years.

The second section of this book consists of four essays chosen from my reminiscences of west Hunan. These were based on letters to my home in Beijing during the winter of 1933 when I went back to visit my old district for a month. Later I re-edited and rewrote these letters. At first sight these essays may strike readers as commonplace travelogues

说来,主要只是学会了逃学,别无意义。但从另一角度看看,却可说我想尽方法,极力逃脱那个封建教育制度下只能养成“禄蠹”的囚笼,而走到空气清新的大自然中去,充分使用我的眼、耳、鼻、口诸官觉,进行另外一种学习。这种自我教育方法,当然不会得到家庭和学校的认可,只能给他们一种顽劣惫懒、不可救药的印象,对我未来前途不抱任何希望。所以在尚未成年以前,我就被迫离开了家庭,到完全陌生的社会里去讨生活。于是在一条沅水流域上下千里范围内,接受严酷生活教育约五年,经过了令人难于设想的颠连困苦、穷饿流荡又离奇不经的遭遇。在这个长长过程中,眼见身边千百同乡亲友糊里糊涂死去了,我却特别幸运,总是绝处逢生,依旧能活下来。既从不因此丧气灰心,失去生存的信念,倒反而真像是读了一本内容无比丰富充实的大书,增加了不少有用的“做人”知识。且深一层懂得“社会”、“人生”的正确含义,更加顽强单纯的走我应走的道路,在任何情形下既不会因生活陷于绝望而堕落,也从不会因小小成就即自足自满。这份教育经验,不仅鼓舞了我于二十岁时两手空空来到北京城,准备阅读一本篇幅更大的新书,同时还充满了童心幻想,以为会从十年二十年新的学习中,必将取得崭新的成就,有以自见。就这么守住一个“独立自主”的做人原则,绝不依傍任何特殊权势企图侥幸成功,也从不以个人工作一时得失在意,坚持学习了二十五年。

这本小书第二部分选译了《湘行散记》中散文四篇。《湘行散记》是我于一九三三年冬还乡,经过约一个月时间写回北京家中一堆通信,后来加以整理贯串完成的。乍一看来,给人印象只是一份写点山水花草琐

describing scenery and miscellaneous incidents; but actually they touched on more complex problems than many of my short stories. In 1933 I left Qingdao University to work in Beijing; and after my marriage there in September that year my life underwent a radical change. We then lived in a detached house inside Xi'an Gate. In one corner of the courtyard by the wall were a date tree and a locust tree; and during the daytime the autumn sunlight filtered down through their branches I had a small eighteenth-century square redwood table in the form of a Song-dynasty lantern, which I put out in the courtyard. Early each morning I worked on my story "The Border Town" there. The sunlight filtering on to my small table was an inspiration for me; yet I wrote rather slowly, completing one chapter a week. After the story was finished I sent it to the *National News Weekly* in Tianjin for publication. But before its completion, towards the end of November, I received a letter from my old home saying that my mother was seriously ill and wanted me to go back. At that time Chiang Kai-shek had mobilized six hundred thousand troops in Jiangxi to attack Ruijin, and the raging battles were causing tens of thousands of casualties. In Hunan the local troops were waging small-scale warfare with forces from Guizhou over the opium tax; thus the situation there was rather tense too. The highway was cut. The journey there and back by boat would take more than one month, and it would be more convenient to travel alone. So I arranged with my wife that I would note down all that happened on the way and post those notes back to her. The weather had turned cold and the rivers were low. I took a boat upstream from Taoyuan in the lower reaches of the Yuan, stopping from time to time. It took me twenty-two days to reach Pushi in the middle reaches of the river. Then I travelled on foot for three days through the mountains before finally reaching my hometown—Fenghuang. During my boat journey, I sat

琐人事的普通游记,事实上却比我许多短篇小说接触到更多复杂问题。三三年夏,我离开学校返回北京工作,九月里成了家,生活起了根本变化。时住在西安门内达子营一个单独小小院子里。院中墙角有一株枣树和一棵槐树,曾为起了个名字叫“一槐一枣庐”。终日有秋阳从树枝间筛下细碎阳光到全院,我却将一个十八世纪仿宋灯笼式红木小方桌搁在小院中,大清早就开始写我的《边城》。从树影筛下的细碎阳光,布满小桌上,对我启发极大。但是工作进展却相当缓慢,每星期只能完成一个章节,完成后就寄过天津《国闻周报》发表。到十一月底,得到家乡来信,知道老母亲病转严重,要我回去看看。其时正是江西方面蒋介石集中了六十万大军,对瑞金进行“围剿”,几次战役异常激烈,死亡以万千人计。我家乡地方那份割据武装,因和接壤的黔军争夺烟土过境税,发生小规模战事,僵持局面也搞得极紧张。公路还未通行,水路来回估计至少得一个多月时间,单独上路比较方便。因此事先和家中人约好,上路后将把沿路见闻逐一写下寄回。时天寒水枯,由沅水下游桃源县开始乘小船上行,随时停停又走走,到达沅水中游的“浦市镇”时,就过了二十二天。又赶山路三天,才到达家乡凤凰。由于小船上生活长日面对湍湍流水,

watching the flowing river all day long and felt very lonely. The villages along the river looked quiet, but actually there was tension in the air, and anytime disaster might strike. Life was very insecure. To spare my wife in Beijing worry, I wrote her one or two letters every day, giving details of all that I saw and heard on the river, and deliberately writing in a light-hearted way. I wrote altogether more than forty letters. While traveling on foot for three days through the mountains, I passed a pavilion in a desolate place where several of my army friends had been killed more than ten years before, and that made me sad; but that night, staying in a small hostel, I wrote a letter to reassure my family in Beijing. When I reached my old home, I learned from my elder brother many facts about the life there of which I had had no conception. Though outside I had often been considered “ideologically backward”, in my hometown they regarded me as a “dangerous character”. It was easier to deal with people outside, but here once you were under suspicion it was hard to clear yourself. The only way was to leave as soon as possible. Apart from paying a courtesy call on my “superior”, I steered clear of other relatives and friends who might ask awkward questions and cause trouble. After staying by my mother’s bedside for three days, I told her that I had already taken too long a holiday and because of pressure of work must hurry back to Beijing. The return journey took me another twelve days, during which I wrote about twenty long letters describing incidents on the way. Back in Beijing, I went on with “The Border Town”, at the same time arranging my letters for publication. They later came out as a collection of essays on my travels in Hunan.

Though this slender volume of essays appears to be a travelogue written at random without much editing, each contains allusions to events and personal feelings which a careful reader can easily detect. I wrote

十分枯寂。沿河表面上还稳定,实外松内紧,随时随地会发生事故,安全上毫无保障。为了免得北京方面担心,所以每天必写一两个信,把水上一切见闻巨细不遗全记下来,且有意写得十分轻松愉快而有趣,一共就约写了四十几封。由浦市镇开始山行那三天,得通过一个地势荒凉的腰站。路过一个亭子,恰是十多年前几个军中熟人一同被害的地方,心情相当沉重。夜里住小客店时,信写得反而更加使北京方面放心。到了家乡,从我哥哥处才深一层明白许多意料不到的现实问题,在外边我尽管经常被人认为“思想落后”,到家乡却肯定我是个“危险人物”,应付外边倒比较省事,家乡事便难言,一犯了疑就无从解释。唯一方法即尽早离开。除了礼貌上必需去见见我那位“老上司”,其他任何亲友都不宜拜访。因为提的问题既无从正面回答,还会出乱子。因此只陪在母亲病床边过了三天,借故北京工作紧迫,假期延长太多,匆匆返回北京了。回来途中又走了十二天,写了约二十次并不付邮的长信,说的还是路上见闻。回来后一面续写《边城》,一面整理这些信件,组成一个比较完整的篇章,分别在刊物上发表。到后来才集成《湘行散记》这个小册子。

这个小册子表面上虽只像是涉笔成趣不加剪裁的一般性游记,其实每个篇章都于谐趣中有深一层感慨和寓意。一个细心的读者,当很容易理会到。内中写的尽管只是沅水流域各个水码头及一只小船上纤夫水手等等琐细平凡人事得失哀乐,其实对于他们的过去和当前,都怀着

about various wharves along the Yuan and insignificant, everyday incidents—the joys and sorrows, successes and failures of boatmen on small junks and their past and present. But what was difficult to express was the pathos of this, and their anxiety about their fate. Even their low standard of living was hard to maintain. They were liable to be crushed by external forces, and their common fate was to come to a sad end. For example, the “commander” in my home district had thirty thousand local troops under him and for twenty years controlled thirteen counties in west Hunan; yet his troops were eventually disbanded and he lost control over them, unable to cope with life’s vicissitudes. I had some premonition of this, and indeed in less than three years it came to pass. Chiang Kai-shek won a temporary victory in Jiangxi, then sent an army to annex and oppress the district, naturally achieving this without much trouble. The generals had to resign, the troops were reorganized and posted elsewhere; then Chiang Kai-shek’s soldiers came in as conquerors and ravaged the countryside.

The four essays in the third section were chosen from my book *West Hunan*, written in the winter of 1937. After the War of Resistance Against Japan broke out and Beijing fell to the invaders, on August 12 I went early in the morning with some friends who taught in Beijing University and Qinghua University to catch the first train to Tianjin. The next day, staying in the French Concession, we learned from the morning paper that fighting had started in Shanghai. Our destination then was Nanjing, but being unable to go by boat to Shanghai we had to wait for some other transport. Ten days later we heard that a British merchant vessel could take us to Yantai, from where we could go by truck to the middle section of the Qingdao-Jinan Railway and there, with luck, we might get a train to Nanjing. Having no other choice, we decided to risk it. I was travelling with

不易形诸笔墨的沉痛和隐忧，预感到他们明天的命运——即这么一种平凡卑微生活，也不容易维持下去，终将作为一种来自外部另一方面的巨大势能所摧毁。生命似异实同，结束于无可奈何情形中。即或我家乡“老总”，还拥有地方武装三万人，割据湘西十三县已二十年，也难免在不易适应的变故中，失去了控制力而终于解体完事。这一切我全预料到。果然不到三年，我的忧虑就证实了。蒋介石在江西取得暂时胜利后，抽出了一个军的实力，来向地方进行兼并压迫，自然不甚费力就达到目的。上级下野，军队改编外调，外来“嫡系军队”侵入成为征服者，地方弄得一团糟。

第三部分从《湘西》一书中选出，共计四篇。全书着手于一九三七年冬天。抗日战争发生后，北京陷落，八月十二日大清早，我和北大、清华两校一些相熟教师，搭第一次平津通车过天津，第二天在法租界一个住处，见早报才知道上海方面已发生战事。我们的终点原是南京，由海船去上海路线已断绝，只好等待机会。过了十来天，却探听出有条英国商船可直达烟台。准备先去烟台，到后再设法乘汽车到当时还通行的胶济路中段，再搭胶济车就可到南京。一切得看气运。我们无从作较多考虑，都冒险上了船。还记得同舱熟人中有美术学院赵太侔夫妇、清华大学谢