

Xiang Shengmo's Twenty Verses on "Invitation to Reclusion"

Entering the mountain is not avoiding the world,
But a deep desire to be far from floating fame.
Streams and stones so blue-green,
Mists and evening clouds unleash my emotions.
The submerged fish knows not to take the bait;
Forest birds have never been startled.
Surely I will dream of dissolving all dust;
Henceforward no thoughts of an official career. (1)

入山非辟世，端為遠浮名
泉石多綠兮，烟霞縱性情
潛鱗自無餌，林鳥不曾驚
應有銷塵夢，從此罷請纓 (一)

Who says reclusive living need be remote?
At the rush gate there is little traffic.
Not only are the civilities for greeting and parting few,
Gone as well are laughing and crying faces.
It is not for the steadiness of lofty sleep,
Rather, thoughts of engagement are idle.
Profit and fame can be seen for what they are,
Neither glory nor dishonor ever my concern. (2)

誰謂幽居僻，華門稀往還
但疏迎送禮，而絕笑啼顏
不是高眠穩，只因結想閒
利名能勘破，榮辱總無關 (二)

Old vines provide straight shade;
The stream is deep, tree shade is cool.
In the end no allowance for vulgar carriage;
At most permit the fisherman's rod.
The small pavilion is made narrow by arriving clouds;
Distant mountains are released broadly by the sky.
In this setting there is a recluse,
Whose dreams do not reach to the capital. (3)

歲古藤陰直，溪深木影寒
終難容俗駕，儘許老漁竿
小閣雲來窄，遙山天放寬
其中有隱者，夢不到長安 (三)

If for a day the heart is not stilled,
Who will gladly don the fisherman's gear?
To the end, matters of regret are late;
Glancing back, clouds to envy are many.
Green rain nourishes fragrant trees;
Azure mists break emerald vines.
Fine mountains begin to have a notion,
And summon me... How about it?! (4)

一日心不死，誰甘著釣蓑
到頭悔事晚，回首羨雲多
綠雨肥芳樹，青烟斷碧蘿
好山始有意，招我欲如何 (四)

If the mountains do not summon me to reclusion,
Then when would I become a Lord Recluse?
Fragrant souls emptily fill the histories,
The bones of knights-errant form graves in waves.
Leave the world for a bounty of surpassing scenes;
Return to the fields and escape the crowd.
Stone moss is elegant after rain;
Cliff trees shimmer lined by clouds. (5)

山不招人隱，何年得隱君
芳魂空載史，俠骨浪成墳
出世饒佳境，歸田有逸群
石苔過雨秀，巖樹襯雲敷 (五)

At times grasping staffs we go out,
Arms about shoulders, idly seeking poems.
Or choose stones to slap down for chess,
Approach streams where we set down our plain zithers.
Waterfall sounds hold the mood of rain;
Cloud shadows add to the pine's shade.
Fresh fruit feeds our pure talk;
Naturalness quiets the worldly heart. (6)

有時扶杖[杖]出，把臂覓閒吟
選石敲棋子，臨溪枕素琴
瀑聲含雨色，雲影補松陰
新菓供清話，自然澹世心 (六)

Being alone is not being without companion:
Books and scrolls, by chance, take half the bed.
Across the stream: a thousand acres of bamboo;
Throughout the day: a brazier of incense.
Village wine, it turns out, works well for getting drunk;
Garden vegetables provide an early taste.
A pure wind arrives, and, pillowed on a bamboo basket,
I've completely forgotten extremes of heat and cold. (7)

獨處非無伴，圖書恰半牀
隔溪千畝竹，盡日一爐香
村酒原堪醉，園蔬得早嘗
清風來枕簟，忘却甚炎涼 (七)

Dawn comes and fills the window,
Though it's still the time of sweet dark slumber.
I arise in time to see clouds emerge;
Return to sleep with memories of blowing rain.
Clouds largely hold the ocean mist;
Rain perfectly adorns the mountains' appearance.
Ever so lightly, flowers open by the stream;
Amid the wonderful fragrance, the butterfly's dream is late. (8)

曉來窗日滿，猶是黑甜時
纔起看雲出，重眠憶雨吹
雲多涵海氣，雨正倩山姿
細細溪花發，殊香蝶化遲 (八)

Picking herbs, my robes dampen with dew;
Seeking the road home, I have the urge to become an immortal.
Pine flowers harmonize the grain rice,
Tea leaves brew in mountain stream water.
Night goes, beckoning the cries of the gibbon;
Morning comes, inviting the crane's slumber.
So many pure outstanding matters;
Which of these would not extend one's years?! (9)

采藥衣沾露，尋歸氣欲仙
松花和麥飯，茗葉釀山泉
夜去呼猿嘯，朝來引鶴眠
許多清絕事，何事不延年 (九)

How special, this place for hidden roosting!
Since old, few have known of it.
I take advantage of these illness-free days,
And casually read books from before the great burning.
Encumbered by objects—what are the roots of this stain?
Great aspirations slowly unfurl from the self.
Forgotten already: the place from which I was summoned to reclusion;
Directly remembered: the start of the reclining journey. (10)

況是幽棲地，從來知己疏
且乘無病日，聊讀未焚書
物累何由染，襟期稍自舒
並忘招隱地，直記臥游初 [處 added here appears to be deleted] (十)

In the mouth of the valley no sign of people;
A pure shimmering highlights an unsullied stream.
Cliffside flowers divine years and months;
Cave grasses distinguish spring from autumn.
Shaded gully abuts the cinnabar cave;
Bright forests are covered in a coat of green.
Who cares about high officials in carriages?
Their faces and postures set to serve nobles. (11)

谷口無人跡，清輝揚素流
巖花占歲月，洞草辨春秋
陰壑臨丹穴，陽林被翠裘
由他軒冕客，顏膝事王侯 (十一)

From the time one enters the ranks of the robe and cap,
Whiskers and eyebrows, a grown gentleman,
To indulge in rewards—that's a young man's goal,
Not to mention receiving worldly acclaim.
But later the wondering begins:
Can one ever escape bending at the waist?
In the mountains there are many things that gladden the heart,
More so when wolves and tigers follow different paths. (12)

自入衣冠列，鬚眉一丈夫
縱酬男子志，亦受世人呼
不早躊躇及，能逃磬折無
山中多樂事，狼虎況殊途 (十二)

In this world there are no men of accomplishment;
Oh, so hard to break the delusions before our eyes!
Already proud to be an idle clerk,
Who would be distressed to lack an untrammelled wife?
Cultivating melons, in the morning I water;
Notating the *Book of Changes*, at night I burn the vine staff.
My sons are taught both tilling and reading;
When were these two matters not of equal worth? (13)

人間無達士，難破眼前迷
既傲為閒吏，奚愁少逸妻
種瓜朝灌水，點易夜然藜
稚子教耕讀，何嘗事不齊 (十三)

Originally of Heaven and Earth,
So who would guess an encounter beyond this world?
Living alone was not my intention;
Keeping harm at a distance, it just naturally followed.
I was not raised to pass my days as a fool;
And it is hard to adopt the manner of being clumsy.
Green mountains, understanding, do not reject;
I want to grow old in utter indolence. (14)

原在乾坤裡，誰言世外逢
索居非得已，遠害詎相從
未養如愚度，難為若拙容
青山知不拒，我欲老疏慵 (十四)

Clambering up forested cliffs,
Leisurely I enter shady green glens.
Amid white clouds I hear dogs barking;
As the sun sets I spot a returning monk.
Orioles harmonize, as if seeking to rhyme;
The dragon submerges—plans put in wait?
I know myself the difficulty of fitting into this world;
Can it be due to an aversion to common emotions? (15)

林壑攀躋上，盤旋入翠微
白雲聞犬吠，落日見僧歸
鶯和如求韻，龍潛豈息機
自知難合世，寧與俗情違 (十五)

Long I set my will to live remotely;
Thatched hut opens after rain.
In my carefree sojourns I dodge material concerns;
Formal bows no longer a concern for who arrives.
The servant boy casually sweeps piles of leaves,
And deftly plants secluded flowers among rocks.
Crossing the bridge in search of a late-day mood,
My sandal-teeth are stained green by the moss. (16)

託志棲遲久，茆堂雨後開
優游逃物外，長揖謝誰來
積葉童閒掃，幽葩石細栽
過橋尋晚興，屐齒染莓苔 (十六)

Since coming to live on this riverside rock,
I no longer hear the clamor of horse and cart.
Beyond the peaks, red dust is distant;
In front of the isles, green water plants flourish.
Strangely, I dislike seagull dreams,
And have never trusted in the 'silent guest.'
The sun presses on its westward journey;
The mien of barren wilds changes to sunset. (17)

自來礪上住，車馬不聞喧
峰外紅塵遠，洲前綠藻繁
翻嫌鷗有夢，未信客無言
白日西馳促，天荒容易昏 (十七)

Hurriedly, rapids flow over white sand;
What's the reason for this busy rush?
Day and night split the forward current;
Murky and clear stem from a single source.
Unsoiled because there's no mixing in the unsoiled;
Turbid as it joins the turbid flow.
Do you not remember the Canglang waters?
And a song whose words it inspired? (18)

白沙走急瀨，何事若忙奔
晝夜分前派，濁清同一源
潔因無混潔，渾以合流渾
不記滄浪水，曾歌自取言 (十八)

I built my hut under a precipitous cliff,
Where connected peaks form a screen.
Facing ridges crisscross, brightly verdant;
Meandering streams narrow, distantly blue.
Rice and grain aplenty to eat year after year;
Orchids finger my robes with their fragrance.
A web of roads reaches into the world;
But here there is bridge and pavilion. (19)

結廬危壁下，連嶂列為屏
對嶺交明翠，迴溪夾遠青
稻粱餘歲食，蘭蕙拂衣馨
複道原通世，有橋還有亭 (十九)

Having exhaustively discussed grounds for mulberry and hemp,
With the Peach Blossom Spring we study the escape from Qin.
Freely speaking, we clarify the nature of things,
And marshal ourselves to personal genuineness.
Cliffs and caves greatly add complexion,
Fishermen and woodcutters are neighbors.
Nesting in reclusion—it is not for outside chaos;
How much more so a man of Great Peace. (20)

盡說桑麻地，桃溪學辟秦
縱云矯物性，聊自率吾真
巖穴多增色，漁樵得比鄰
巢居非亂世，況是太平人 (二十)