

Scholar's Stationaries Collected by Suzhou Museum

苏州博物馆





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序

笔之渊源可归溯到新石器时代的竹笔,竹简产生后,竹笔便被广泛应用,演变成"蝌蚪笔"。《篆文入门》曾载:"古代以竹笔涂点,漆于竹简,竹滑漆,不能行画,辄成头粗尾细之状,其形像蝌蚪,故得此名,然至今已不可见。"1954年湖南长沙左家公山古墓中发现战国时期楚国毛笔,笔杆竹制,笔头用兔箭毛包扎在竹杆外周,裹以麻丝,髹以漆汁,笔锋尖挺,是书写竹简之尚好工具。《史记》云:始皇令恬与太子扶苏筑长城,恬取中山兔毛造笔,令判案也。由此,时人多以"蒙恬制笔"作为毛笔之始。

早期之墨,用于绘画,而非书写。在距今五六千年前的史前遗物中,不但出土过用红、白、褐、黑颜料绘制的彩陶,还发现过不少天然矿物颜料。1975年湖北云梦睡虎地秦墓发现的墨块,是已知最早的实物人工墨。墨的形状为小圆块,在砚台上研墨时无法用手直接拿着,只能用研石压研。早期墨主要成分多为松烟,手工捏制而成。东汉时期,墨的制作日趋精良,形体逐渐固定,体量慢慢增大。三国时期魏国的韦诞(字仲将)是最早见于记载的制墨名家,被誉为"仲将之墨,一点如漆"。

汉兴已有幡纸代简而未通用。1957年,在西安东郊灞桥砖瓦厂发现了一座不晚于西汉武帝时代的土室墓葬,墓中一枚青铜镜上,垫衬着麻类纤维纸的残片,专家们给它定名"灞桥纸",是目前发现最早的植物纤维纸。和帝时,蔡敬仲用树皮及敝布鱼网以为纸奏上,帝善其能,自是天下咸谓之"蔡侯纸"。现知"宣纸"一词,最早出现于唐代张彦远《历代名画记》:"江东地润无尘,人多精艺。好事家宜置宣纸百幅,用法蜡之,以备摹写。""江东"即长江以东,宣州一带。

《释名》云:"砚者,研也。可研墨使和濡也。"可见,砚之初仅作为一种研磨器。

湖北云梦睡虎地秦代墓中出土的一方石砚,研及研石由鹅卵石原形略作加工而成,研面与研石面均有使用痕迹和墨迹,是目前所见到最早的古砚实物。隋唐之前的砚取材多为天然砾石,其后又渐渐以陶泥烧造,并先后发现了端石、歙石、鲁石、洮石等造砚材料。

北宋雍熙三年,第一部集各家之大成,完整系统地记载笔、墨、纸、砚的专著——《文房四谱》汇辑而成。但究其"文房"一词,最早出现应于南北朝时期。《梁书·江革传》载:"时吴兴沈约、乐安任昉并相赏重,昉与革书云:'此段雍府妙选英才,文房之职,总卿昆季,可谓驭二龙于长途,骋骐骥于千里。'"《南史·赵知礼蔡景历等传论》叙:"赵知礼、蔡景历属陈武经纶之日,居文房书记之任,此乃宋、齐之初傅亮、王俭之职。"由此看出,彼"文房"非此"文房"也。南唐李后主雅好文学,收藏甚丰,"建业文房之印"多见于其所藏书画之中。"文房"一词真正用于书房之意则应始于唐朝。刘禹锡《酬令狐留守巡内至集贤院见寄》诗"仙院文房隔旧宫,当时盛事尽成空"与元稹《酬乐天东南行》诗"文房长遣闭,经肆未曾铺"中"文房"一词含义甚迥,前句还指"文书典章之所",后句则与"书房"无异。直至宋代,"文房"已专指书房,这恰与宋代文人阶层地位的提高相互吻合。从南北朝开始使用的"文房"一词,在历经五百多年之后终归于一统。

何谓"文房清供"或谓"文房雅玩"?在南北宋这个重文轻武的年代,其内涵和外延从始创逐渐系统化,并进一步得以发展,不得不归功于文人的参与。当时的文人,已成为社会审美导向的标准,技艺精湛的工匠与风雅清闲的文人,吟来唱和,共谱出一曲"文房雅玩"之韵。苏东坡、米芾甚至于宋徽宗赵佶,莫不如是。从北宋至南宋,文房清玩由始创至逐步系统化并得以全面发展,文人的品味,文人的姿态,文人的雅好,成为那个时代的风尚之标。时人对笔、墨、纸、砚之重要性的认知度正如《文房四谱》的作者大学士苏士简在《后记》中所言:"吾见其决泄古先之道,发扬翰墨之精,莫不由是四者,方传之无穷乎?苟阙其一,虽敏妙之士,如廉颇不能将楚人也。"

由"文房四谱"衍生出的清玩之物,甚为丰富。南宋末的文人赵希鹄在《洞天清禄集》中,将此归纳为:古琴、古砚、古钟鼎彝器、怪石、砚屏、笔格、水滴、古翰墨真迹、古今石刻、古今纸花印色、古画加之香、茶、纸、墨,共十四类。内容之广,蕴涵之丰,莫不称奇。从此间叙述可见,"文房清供"已远远超出了其实用价值,而更多的为赏鉴之途。

时至明代,这个文人文化高度发达的年代,"文房清供"被普遍的文人所认同,其实用价值再度降低。文人对其追捧,更多是在诉求一种致精的生活方式,一种古雅的生活态度,一种闲隐的生活追求。明高濂在《遵生八笺》中言:"文房器具,非玩物等也。古人云:笔砚精良,人生一乐。"可以想像,那是怎样的一种燕闲清赏之态!翻阅这一时期的文人小品,无论是明初的曹昭,还是明末的文震亨,对文房清供的认识不断地提升。人们愈追求器玩,器玩制作也就愈精巧,工艺的兴盛发展为文房清玩之风的兴盛奠定了基础。屠隆的《考槃余事·文房器具笺》中,列举出的清玩之物竟达四十五种之多,这其中既有之前赵希鹄提到的笔格、砚屏之类,之后陆续出现的秘阁、贝光之属,更有外延不断扩大的靉靆、布泉之类,可见当时文人的风雅之致。

清代文人承上启下,初期对明代尚古之风的追捧,后期又开启了近代求精求技之风,诗、书画、篆刻兼备者比比皆是。当时的文人在积极创作的同时,极力寻求必备的文玩之精品。

苏州,明清文人记忆中的风雅之地,当时物产之丰富,经济之发达,文化之昌盛,其他地方,盖莫能数。从同为天堂之地的文人王士性《广志绎》中的叙述,可见一斑:"姑苏人聪慧好古,亦善仿古法为之,书画之临摹,鼎彝之冶淬,能令真赝不辨。又善操海内上下进退之权,苏人以为雅者,则四方随而雅之,俗者,则随而俗之,其赏识品第本精,故物莫能违。"这样的溢美之词,苏州,俨然成为天下时尚的教主。文房四宝中,苏州灵岩蠖村亦以砚名,惜不入流。这是天宝地灵之所限,而人力能挽的,在"点石成金"的巧工绝技,清初顾氏四代以治砚名闻朝野,顾圣之"所制砚皆仿古式,朴雅

可玩",顾二娘非端溪老坑佳石不肯奏刀,故鉴识砚材是其所长,只须以脚尖点石,即能辨别优劣新旧,当时就有唱词赞道:"玉指金莲为底忙,墨花犹带粉花香。"至民国常熟陈端友,更是集大成者。善制笔者,清代有吴县王永清,包世臣《艺舟双楫·记两笔工语》曾录其制笔心诀。南宋太平老人《袖中锦》定"吴纸"为天下第一,春膏、玉水两笺为其代表,及至明代,高濂《燕闲清赏笺》卷中记道:"近日可用书者,吴中无纹酒金笺纸为佳。"清代四大制墨名家之一曹素功在康熙南巡金陵之时,以墨进,帝赐"紫玉光"三字,声名雀起。为了开拓市场,墨店于乾、嘉年间由六世孙曹德酬在苏州开设分店。四宝之外的"文房清供"中,苏州工艺,吴中绝技也逐渐占据了半壁江山。

苏州博物馆藏文房雅玩为馆藏亮点之一,得助于何澄子女、柳亚子、吴湖帆、顾公硕兄弟、钱镛徐玥夫妇等文人志士的热心捐赠及五十年来我馆文物工作者的不懈努力,各类文房清供之物达3000余件。传是楼藏砚、"三松"款笔筒、搁臂、杨澥治印,方于鲁、程凤池、曹素功、胡开文等名家制墨……皆为当时之精品,传世之名作。

如何将这些雅玩之物配之以雅致的家具,营构一个迥俗的读书空间,经营起一个兼具知性与美感的书斋生活世界,对于中国文人,特别是明代中期以后的文人雅士来说,甚至是比读书本身更为重要的追求。本图录精选的200余件器物都是上述"书斋"文物,也就是在明末被嘉兴沈德符列指为"时玩"的赖以成就文人闲赏优雅生活的"玩好之物"。与此同时推出"文房雅玩—— 苏州明清时期文人书房用具展",以期"文房清供"之物能为读者和观众口述历史,释放记忆,以备雅好之士研究欣赏之需。

苏州博物馆学术委员会 2011年10月

Preface

The origin of the Chinese brush can be traced back to the bamboo brushes of the Neolithic Period. After the invention of bamboo slips, the use of such bamboo brushes became widespread and they later evolved into the "tadpole brush." An Introduction to the Seal Script explains, "In ancient times, bamboo brushes were used to apply paint, but because they were slippery, they were not so useful for painting. This difficulty was solved by making their shape thick at the 'head' and thin at the 'tail'—like a tadpole—and that is reason for their name. But now there were none to be seen." In 1954 in an ancient tomb at the site of Mount Zuojiagong in Changsha, Hunan Province, archaeologists discovered, brushes made in the state of Chu during the Warring States period. The body of the brush was made of bamboo, and the tip was made of bristly rabbit hairs bundled around one end of the bamboo shaft with hempen threads. The hairs of the tip were lacquered to form a sharp point, ideal for inscribing bamboo slips. The Records of the Grand Historian says that when the First Emperor commanded General Meng Tian and the heirapparent Fu Su to construct the Great Wall, General Meng Tian collected rabbit hair from Zhongshan to make writing brushes, and it was ordered that they be used in recording legal decisions. Thus, many people regard "Meng Tian making writing brushes" as the origin of the brush.

In the early period, ink was used for painting, not calligraphy. Among prehistoric relics dating back five and six thousand years, not only are there the excavated pottery vessels painted in red,

white, ochre, and black, but also there have been discovered numerous mineral pigments. Ink pellets discovered in 1975 in a Qin Dynasty(221-207 BC) tomb at the site of Shuihudi in Yunmeng, Hubei Province, are our earliest known examples of man-made ink. When the small, round ink pellets were placed on the ink slab, they could not be picked up by hand but could only be ground with a stone. This early ink was made primarily of pine soot and fashioned by hand. During the Eastern Han period, ink production became more and more refined, the shape became standardized and the size enlarged. Wei Dan, a native of the state of Wei during the Three Kingdoms period(220-280), is recorded as the first famous ink maker.

By the beginning of the Han Dynasty(206BC-220AD) rag paper had started to replace bamboo slips though its use was not widespread. In 1957, archaeologists discovered in the vicinity of the brick factory near the Ba Bridge in eastern Xi'an an earthen tomb no later than the period of Emperor Wu of the Han. In the tomb they found a bronze mirror on which were fragments of paper made with linen fibres. Specialists refer to this find as "Ba Bridge Paper" and regard it as the earliest paper made with plant fibres. In the time of Emperor He, Cai Jingzhong used bark and fishing net to make paper, which he presented to the emperor. The ruler praised his ability and everyone called his invention, "Marquis Cai's Paper." The earliest appearance of the term "xuan (or rice) paper" is found in Zhang Yanyuan's Tang-dynasty(618-907) text, Famous Painters of Previous Dynasties: "In the eastern Yangtze River area the land is fertile and people highly skilled. A family in which a wedding was to occur would prepare one hundred pieces of xuan paper to which wax was applied so that the paper could be used to make rubbings." The eastern Yangtze River area is where Xuanzhou city was located, the city from which "xuan paper" takes its name.

The classical dictionary Interpretation on Terms states, "The word 'inkstone' means 'grind.' It was used for grinding and wetting ink." Thus we can see that the inkstone originated as a tool for grinding. The inkstone found in the Qin tomb at Shuihudi was made from a slightly reworked cobblestone. Markings indicating use and traces of ink identify it as the earliest inkslab we know of. Inkstones before Sui Dynasty (581-618) and Tang Dynasty were mostly made from gravel. Later they gradually came to be made of fired clay. But both before and after this time, the four famous inkstone materials are found: Duan stone, She stone, Lu stone, and Tao stone.

In 986 A.D. the third year of the Yongxi Period of Emperor Taizong of the Northern Song, the first great compilation to bring together comprehensively and systematically the writings of several authorities on the brush, ink, paper, and the inkstone was completed. This was The Four Treasures of the Study. If we investigate further the term "study," which appears in its title, we find that its earliest occurrence dates to the Southern Dynasties(420-589) and Northern Dynasties(386-581). However, not until the Tang Dynasty did the term truly refer to the place where a scholar reads and writes. We have examples of this usage in poems by Liu Yuxi and Yuan Zhen. In Song times the term conveys the high social status of the scholars whose work involved study.

What was the "charm" and what were the "elegant accessories" to which literary sources allude when describing classical scholar's study? During the Northern Song(960-1127) and Southern Song(1127-1279) Dynasties, when civil arts were emphasized over military arts, scholars may be credited for developing all aspects of the study. Literary figures of the period, who set the aesthetic standards for society, along with highly skilled craftsmen "composed" the tune "Elegant Accessories of the Scholar's Study." Among them were the famous scholars Su Shi and Mi Fu, as well as the Song

Dynasty emperor Huizong. From the Northern Song to the Southern Song, as the charm of the study became fully developed, the tastes, attitudes, and preferences of the scholars became the standards for the age. In Su Shijian's "Postface" to The Four Treasures of the Study we see how highly the people of that time regarded brush, ink, paper, and inkstones.

A rich variety of accessories accompanied "the four treasures of the study." The late Southern Song literati figure Zhao Xihu distinguished fourteen categories of objects: the ancient seven-stringed lute, the ancient inkstone, the antique ritual vessels, scholar's stones, screens, brush holders, tea basins, antique ink, antique and contemporary stone carvings, antique and contemporary prints and paintings, together with incense, tea, paper, and ink.

During the Ming Dynasty(1368-1644), when literati culture reached an extremely high point of development, accessories of the study gained universal recognition among the literati. Although their practical value was in fact low, the literati sought them because of their desire for a refined, elegant, and secluded lifestyle. Gao Lian, a Ming scholar, observed, "The tools of the study are not toys. As the ancients said, 'Superior brushes and inkstones are the greatest joys in one's life.'" By examining the writings of the Ming literati we can gain a better understanding of their appreciation of the accessories of the study. The more people sought these objects, the more refined their craftsmanship became. In his Notes on the Implements Used in the Study, Tu Long of the Ming identified forty-five types of accessories among which were the brush-holders and inkstone screens mentioned by Zhao Xihe, as well as compartments, ancient coins, and other things.

Literati figures of the early Qing period, engaged in the pursuit of antiquity as had scholars in

the Ming, but during the later part of the dynasty they started to cultivate the style of scholars more recent times: composing poems, painting, doing calligraphy, and carving seals. Thus, while producing a considerable body of creative work, literati at the same time searched for excellent accessory pieces for the study.

In Suzhou, a place whose grace is noted by the literati of Ming and Qing times, an abundance of products, a prosperous economy, and a flourishing culture was matched by no other place. As the literatus Wang Shixing noted, Suzhou intellectuals chose to avoid politics and to immerse themselves in antiquity and the arts. Because of their expertise in imitating ancient calligraphy and paintings, they inspired the entire country to follow their practices. Whatever people from Suzhou declared elegant, everyone found elegant; and whatever they deemed vulgar, everyone found vulgar. Among the "four treasures of the study," the inkstones from Huo Village in Suzhou's Lingyan Mountain were well known, but, alas, they never really gained popularity. Gu Erniang, a Suzhou native during the Qing Dynasty(1644-1911), was famous for her inkstone designs. She used only Duanzhou slate, and legend tells how she selected the best slate using the tips of her toes. As to the Republic of China(1912-1949), Chen Duanyou from Changshu city was recognized as the "ultimate master." During Qing Dynasty among those skilled at making brushes, there was Wang Yongqing of Suzhou's Wu County. The literature of the time reveals his secret methods. Song literati praised the goldflecked but otherwise undecorated paper from the Wu area as "the best" paper for writing. Cao Sugong, one of the four great ink-makers in Qing Dynasty earned his fame when he presented his ink to the Kangxi Emperor when the Emperor visited the south. During Qianlong and Jiajing Periods, Cao Dechou, the 6th generation of Cao Sugong, set up the branch ink shop in Suzhou as a way of dominating the market. At the time the Suzhou area was recognized as

home to the most advanced techniques for making all the accessories for the scholar's study.

A major achievement of the Suzhou Museum's exhibition, "Elegant Objects from a Scholar's Study," is that we have gathered together three thousand pieces, thanks to the kind and generous donations from the descendants of He Cheng, Liu Yazi, Wu Hufan, Gu Gongshuo and his brother, Qian Yong and his wife Xu Yue. Moreover, due to the great effort devoted to this exhibition by our Museum staff, we were able to show such famous pieces as the Inkstone from the Chuanshilou Collection, the Brush Pot and Brush Holder with the Inscription "Zhu Sansong," seals made by Yang Xie, and ink made by the famous ink producers Fang Yulu, Cheng Fengchi, Cao Sugong, and Hu Kaiwen.

Chinese scholars, especially those who lived after the middle Ming period, were deeply concerned with creating for themselves elegant study spaces that were finely furnished and tastefully equipped. Sometimes these considerations were even more important than the act of reading, which took place in such surroundings .Over 200 pieces selected for this catalogue are among the artefacts of the study described above and are at the same time the "delightful objects," discussed by Shen Defu in the late Ming Dynasty that brought more elegance to the study. We hope that these exquisite objects of the scholar's study will offer a grand picture of their history, reanimate memories in the minds of viewers, as well as inspire further scholarly research.

Academic Committee, Suzhou Museum
October, 2011

