

THE FOUR TREASURES OF THE STUDY

SHANGHAI PEOPLE'S FINE ARTS PUBLISHING HOUSE



艺林撷珍丛书

A COLLECTION OF BEST ARTISTIC WORKS
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文房四宝



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Four treasures of the study

Among the various tools of calligraphy, writing brush is peculiar to China.

The brushes are varied, and white goat's hair, black rabbit's hair and yellow weasel's hair are three major types. On the basis of the function of tip, the brushes are classified into three groups: "Hard", "Soft" and "Both". The handle is made of not only bamboo, wood, lacquer and porcelain, but also some precious materials including mother-of-pearl inlay, ivory and jade.

Writing brush has such a long history that prehistoric painted pottery, inscriptions on oracle bones, bamboo slips and silks are all writing materials for brush. Some ancient writing brushes were also excavated in the graves of the Spring and Autumn Period, the Warring States, the Qin and Han Dynasties.

In the Tang and Song Dynasties, Xuanzhou became the national writing-brush-producing center, whose products were called "Xuan-bi", and "Zhuge-bi" was the best in quality in Xuanzhou. After the Yuan Dynasty the brush-producing industry of Huzhou boomed, and "Hu-bi" replaced "Xuan-bi". The characteristics of "Hu-bi" were sharp, neat, round and tough.

The ink-stick is the unique pigment of Chinese traditional painting and calligraphy. At the initial stage natural ink or half-natural ink was generally used. It was during the Han that artificial ink appeared. At that time the most famous ink-stick was

"Yumi-mo" produced at Qianyang, Shaanxi. The raw materials of ink-stick were pine, oil and lacquer.

Before the Five Dynasties the ink-producing center was in the North, then it reached the South. The most celebrated South ink-stick was "Hui-mo", which was produced in Huizhou of Anhui.

The founders of "Hui-mo" were Li Chao and his son Li Tinggui. In the South Tang "Li-Tinggui-mo" ranked first in the whole country for the quality as well as "Cheng-xin-tang" paper and "Longwei" inkstone. The Song ink-producing specialists were Zhang Yu and Pan Gu. Ming ink-producing industry was divided into two groups: "Shexian" and "Xiuning". The representatives of "Shexian" were Luo Xiaohua, Cheng Junfang and Fang Yulu, and Wang Zhongshan and Shao Gezhi were the experts of "Xiuning". In the Qing Dynasty Chao Sugong, Wang Maisheng, Wang Jiean and Hu Kaiwen, who were all good at producing ink-stick, were called "Four ink-producing masters".

Paper is one of the most famous Chinese inventions. It is widely accepted that paper was invented by Cai Lun in the Eastern Han. However the archaeologists have discovered paper of Western Han such as "Fang-ma-tan" paper, "Ba-qiao" paper, "Xuan-quan" paper, "Ma-quan-wan" paper, "Ju-yan" paper and "Han-tan-po" paper. Some of them were even used as writing materials. Although there is no agreement between scholars, it is indisputable that paper had already appeared

in the Han Dynasty.

After the Eastern Jin Dynasty, paper was extensively used instead of traditional writing materials such as bamboo slips and silks. Various methods of producing paper emerged one after another.

In the Tang and Song Dynasties, the paper-producing industry was very thriving. Celebrated products in best quality appeared one after another. The crimson writing paper called "Xue Tao" paper, produced by poetess Xue Tao, was in vogue for a while. At that time the writing paper produced by Xie Jinchu was also very popular. In the Song Dynasty "Cheng-xin-tang" paper produced in the late Tang won the praises from the masses. In addition Haiyan Jinsu Temple in Zhejiang was well known for its paper products throughout the country. In the Qing "Xuan-zhi" produced in Jing Prefecture of Anhui (Xuanzhou), became the special paper for painting and calligraphy, and was regarded as "the king of the paper"

Inkstone is the most important of "four treasures of the study". Because of its solid texture inkstone can be handed down from ancient times.

In the ruins of primitive society the archaeologists discovered simple stone ink-slab that needed a pestle to grind pigments. After artificial ink-sticks appeared in Han, pestle gradually disappeared. There were pottery ink-slab, lacquer ink-slab and copper ink-slab in the Han Dynasty as well as stone ink-slab. Among the stone ink-slabs, the

round tripod pieces were the most typical. During the Wei, Jin and Northern-and-Southern Dynasties, round tripod porcelain ink-slabs were in vogue. It was in the Sui and Tang that "Piyong" inkstone having circular legs appeared.

In the Tang and Song, Duan inkstone, Xi inkstone, Tao inkstone and Chengni inkstone were known as four celebrated inkstones. Duan inkstone was produced at Zhaoxin of Guangdong, and Xi inkstone at Wuyuan of Jiangxi, Tao inkstone at Min Prefecture of Gansu. The products of Jiangzhou and Guozhou were the best of Chengni inkstones, which were produced along the rivers in the North.

The famous ancient inkstone specialists were Gu Erniang and Lu Kuisheng. Gu Erniang, a of master Wu of Jiangsu in the Qing, was well known for his works of classic elegance. Lu Kuisheng, who was at Yangzhou of Jiangsu under the reign of Jiaqing and Daoguang, was good at producing lacquer inkstones.

Ancient tools of calligraphy included not only brush, ink-stick, paper and inkstone, but also some accessories such as penholder, brush pot, ink box, paperweight, seal, seal box. The raw materials of these tools were pottery, porcelain, copper, iron, lacquer, wood, bamboo, stone, jade, jadeite, agate and coral.

文房四宝

● 笔

在林林总总的笔类制品中,毛笔可算是中国独有的品类了。传统的毛笔不但是古人必备的文房用具,而且在表达中华书法、绘画的特殊韵味上具有与众不同的魅力。不过由于毛笔易损,不好保存,故留传至今的古笔实属凤毛麟角。

古笔的品种较多,从笔毫的原料上来分,就曾有兔毛、白羊毛、青羊毛、黄羊毛、羊须、马毛、鹿毛、麝毛、獾毛、狸毛、貂鼠毛、鼠须、鼠尾、虎毛、狼尾、狐毛、獭毛、猩猩毛、鹅毛、鸭毛、鸡毛、雉毛、猪毛、胎发、人须、茅草等。从性能上分,则有硬毫、软毫、兼毫。从笔管的质地来分,又有水竹、鸡毛竹、斑竹、棕竹、紫檀木、鸡翅木、檀香木、楠木、花梨木、沉香木、雕漆、绿沉漆、螺钿、象牙、犀角、牛角、麟角、玳瑁、玉、水晶、琉璃、金、银、瓷等,不少属珍贵的材料。

最早的毛笔,大约可追溯到二千多年之前。

西周以上虽然迄今尚未见有毛笔的实物,但从史前的彩陶花纹、商代的甲骨文等上可觅到些许用笔的迹象。

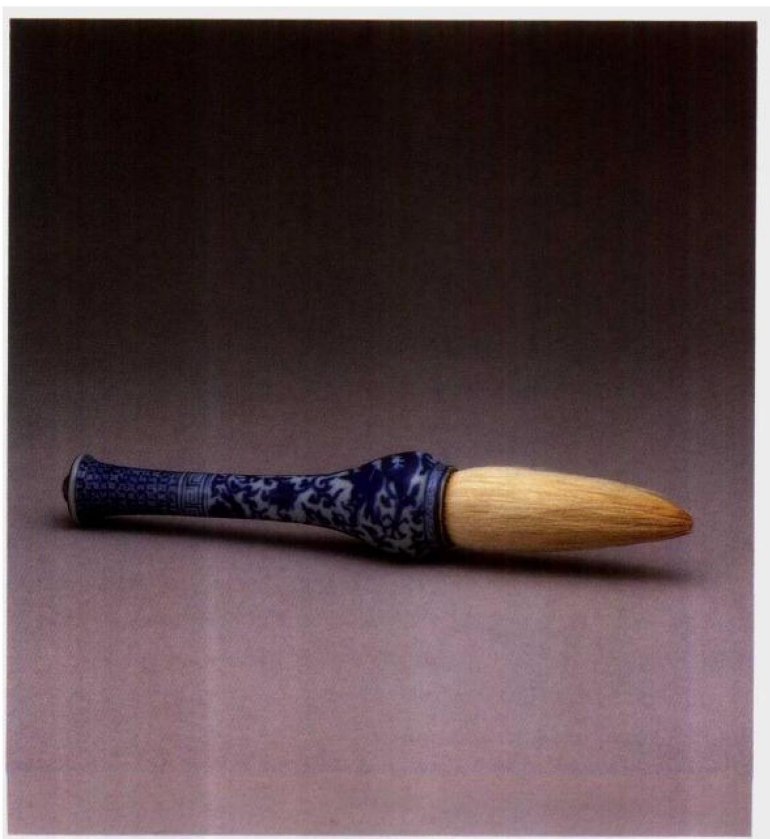
东周的竹木简、缣帛上已广泛使用毛笔来书写。湖北省随州市擂鼓墩曾侯乙墓发现了春秋时期的毛笔,是目前发现最早的笔。其后,湖南省长沙市左家公山出土的战国笔,湖北省云梦县睡虎地、甘肃省天水市放马滩出土的秦笔,及长沙马王堆、湖北省江陵县凤凰山、甘肃省武威市、敦煌市悬泉置和马圈湾、内蒙古自治区古居延地区的汉笔,武威的西晋笔等都是上古时代遗存的不可多得的宝贵资料。

这些早期的笔尽管笔管质地与今天类同,亦取材于竹木,但纳毫形制或与今稍有区别,有的将笔毛围在笔管的一端,缠以丝线,并髹漆;有的在笔管底端劈成数瓣,将毫夹在其间,而后再以细丝线缠束,然后髹以漆。笔锋短而硬,富有弹性,有兔毫、狼毫、羊毫等。汉笔上有的还刻以制作者的姓名,如“白马作”、“史虎作”等,是中国最早的传世造笔工匠姓

名。

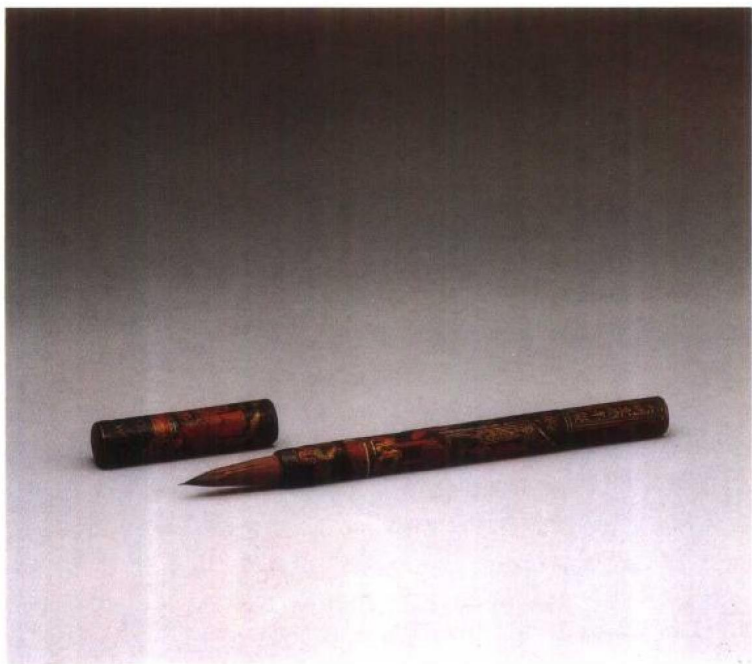
史有蒙恬造笔之说。称秦将蒙恬率军伐楚，南下至中山地区，因见此处山兔毛甚佳，遂用以制笔，毛笔就此诞生。据考古发现，蒙恬以前已有毛笔，故蒙恬应是将前有之毛笔参以己意，加以改良而已。

先秦时，毛笔有多种名称，如“聿”、“不律”、“弗”等。秦平天下后统称为“笔”。



1 景德镇窑青花缠枝莲龙纹瓷管笔 明万历

A blue and white shaft of writing brush with interlocking lotus-and-dragon design (Wanli-Ming)



2 黑漆鑲嵌彩繪管筆 明宣德

A lacquer shaft of writing brush decorated with coloured drawings (Xuande-Ming)

3 彩漆云龙管筆 明嘉靖

A lacquer shaft of writing brush with cloud and dragon design (Jiajing-Ming)

据文献记载，汉代毛笔已较注重装饰，天子所用毛笔的笔杆上镶嵌以杂宝，放笔的匣亦饰宝，并间饰以玉璧、翠羽，价值百金。后世的毛笔对工艺性、艺术性的追求更为多样。

唐宋年间，制笔业的中心在当时的宣州（今安徽省宣州市），称“宣笔”。宣笔实际上是用兔毫制成的紫毫笔，精致绝伦，名闻遐迩。

唐代宣笔在选料和技艺上水平十分高超。盛行的鸡距笔锋短形如鸡距，毫芒犀利劲健，如剑如戟，使秉之者笔力得发。不仅令文人名士极为推崇，而且已成为进献朝廷的贡品，一时价如金贵。

大诗人白居易曾有《紫毫笔》诗：“紫毫笔，尖如锥兮利如刀，江南石上有老兔，吃竹饮泉生紫毫，宣城工人采为笔，千万毛中拣一毫；毫虽轻，工甚重，管勒工名称岁贡，君兮臣兮勿轻用；勿轻用，将何如，愿赐东西府御史，愿颁左右台起居，搦管趋入黄金殿，抽毫立在白玉除，臣有奸邪正衙奏，君有动言直笔书；起居郎，侍御史，尔知紫毫不易置，每发宣城进笔时，紫毫之价如金贵，慎勿空将弹失仪，慎勿空将录制词。”耿伟《咏宣州笔》诗云：“落笔惊风起，摇空沬露浓；丹青与纪事，舍此复何从。”女诗人薛涛也有一首《笔离手》：“越管宣毫始称情，红笺纸上撒花琼，都缘用久锋头尽，不得羲之手里擎。”对宣笔都称颂有加。

唐代影响最大的笔工是诸葛氏，其家族大多操持此业，所制人称“诸葛笔”。当时有人求诸葛笔一支，酬以十金，并号为翘轩宝箬。

宋代诸葛笔世传其业，仍甲于天下，当时得之者，都宝作珍玩。大书法家黄山谷吟诗曰：“宣城变样蹲鸡距，诸葛名家捋鼠须，一束喜从公处得，千金求买市中无；漫持墨客囊科斗，胜与朱门饱蠹鱼，愧我初非草玄手，不将闲写吏文书。”另一诗人林和靖赞道：“顷得宛陵（宣城）葛生笔，如麾百胜之师横行纸墨，所向如意。”

诸葛氏新制的无心散卓笔，根基牢固，久用不散，一枝可

抵它笔数支。他人仿制，皆得其形似，而无其法，反不如常笔。这种笔深得大文豪苏东坡的喜爱，作字婉转可意，妍媚百出，自得其趣，其书风当与笔的作用密切相关，并在不少程度上得力于笔。

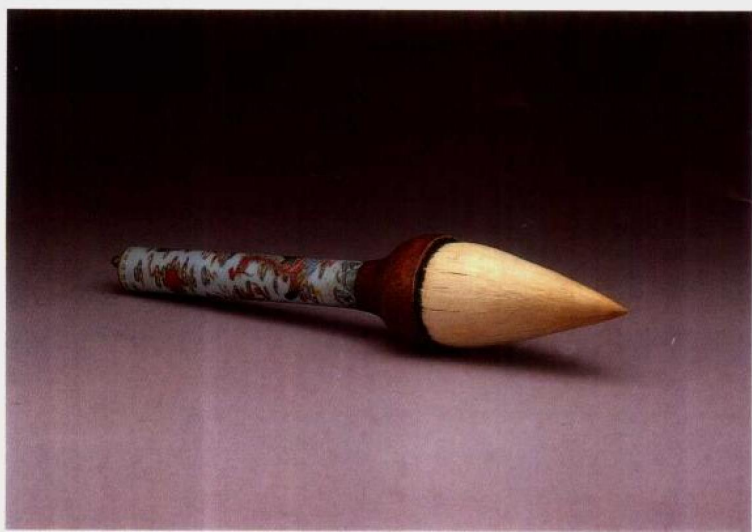
诸葛氏一门最为出众者为诸葛高，诗人梅圣俞说：“笔工诸葛高，海内称第一！”大文人欧阳修诗称：“圣俞宣城人，能使紫毫笔，宜人诸葛高，世业守不失，紧心缚长毫，三付颇精密，软硬适人手，百管不差一。”

除宣州的诸葛笔外，著名的还有徽州的汪伯立笔，在当时与澄心堂纸、李廷珪墨、羊斗岭硯（即龙尾硯）并称为“新安四宝”。

宣笔之后，首屈一指的当推产于浙江省湖州市的“湖笔”。

南宋以后，朝廷偏安一隅，政治、经济、文化中心南移。到元代时，浙江吴兴（今湖州）的制笔业遂异军突起，逐渐取代了宣笔的霸主地位，成为此后独领风骚数百年的笔中骄子。

吴兴善琚村集居着数千户居民，多习制笔技艺，至若妇女亦能为之，各地的商贩云会于此，贸易十分兴盛，称“笔都”名不虚传。湖笔原料取自当地的特产白山羊毛，毛白而长，粗细匀称，柔润适中；笔管出余杭县文山，非此则不中笔材。制笔工序分浸皮、发酵、采毛、选毫、分毫、熟毫、扎头、装置笔套、剔毫、刻字等。制成的毛笔具有锋颖尖锐、修剪整齐、丰硕圆润、劲健有力的特点，所谓“四德”，被誉为“毛颖之技甲天下”。元代制笔名工冯应科所造笔，当时与赵子昂的字、钱舜举的画并称为“吴兴三绝”，有“吴兴冯笔妙无伦”之赞语。另一名工陆文宝，则被颂为“吴兴笔工陆文宝，制笔不与常人同。自然入手超神妙，所以举世称良工”。湖笔还进入宫廷，承接了“御用笔”的制作，更使它的声名大振。如据载，尚方有所需时，非名工张进中的笔不用，张进中每月携笔入宫时，必蒙赐酒食。明代笔工施文用精制的笔亦多作为贡品，是达官贵人案头几间的清玩。

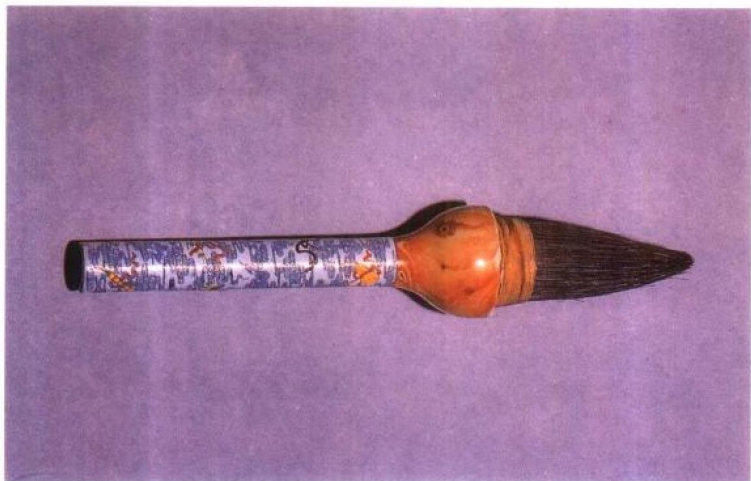


4 景德镇窑霁红青花云龙纹瓷管笔 清乾隆

A coral-ground blue and white shaft of writing brush with cloud-and-dragon design (Qianlong-Qing)

5 景德镇窑粉彩飞凤纹瓷管笔 清乾隆

A Famille-rose shaft of writing brush with phoenix design (Qianlong-Qing)

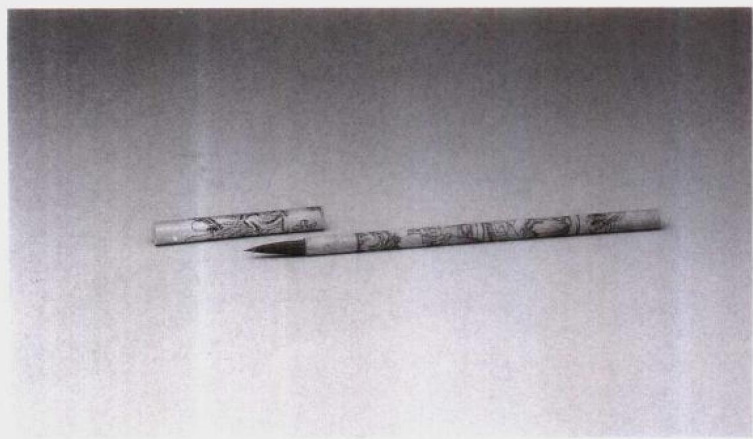
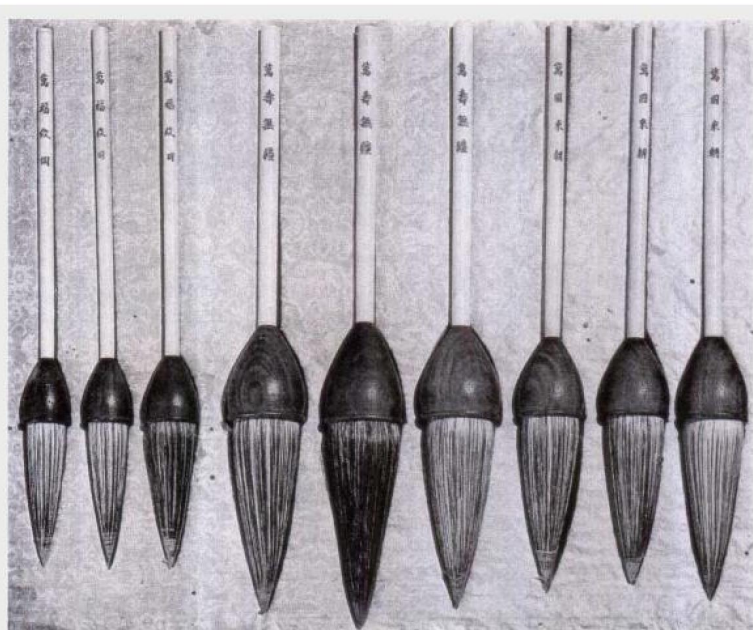


6 粉彩八仙瓷管斗筆 清

A famille-rose shaft of writing brush with eight immortals design (Qing)

7 嵌螺鈿漆管筆 清乾隆

A lacquer shaft of writing brush inlaid with mother-of-pearl (Qianlong-Qing)



8 牙管斗筆 清

A writing brush with ivory shaft (Qianlong-Qing)

9 山水人物纹象牙管笔 清

An ivory shaft of writing brush with landscape-and-figure design (Qianlong-Qing)

● 墨

墨给人的印象似稍嫌单一，但却是古代书写中必不可缺的用品。借助于这种独创的材料，中国书画奇幻美妙的艺术意境才能得以实现。墨的世界并不乏味，而是内涵丰富。作为一种消耗品，墨能完好如初地呈现于今者，当十分珍贵。

对于文房四宝的工艺过程，制笔、造纸、刻砚人们可能稍为了解一些，而关于制墨，也许多数人就比较陌生了。

在人工制墨发明之前，一般利用天然墨或半天然墨来做为书写材料。史前的彩陶纹饰、商周的甲骨文、竹木简牍、缣帛书画等到处留下了原始用墨的遗痕。文献记载，古代的墨刑（黥面）、墨绳（木工所用）、墨龟（占卜）也均曾用墨。经过这段漫长的历程，至汉代，终于开始出现了人工墨品。这种墨原料取自松烟，最初是用手捏合而成，后采用模制，墨质坚实。据东汉应劭《汉官仪》记载：“尚书令、仆、丞、郎，月赐隃麋大墨一枚，隃麋小墨一枚。”隃麋在今陕西省千阳县，靠近终南山，其山古松甚多，用来烧制成墨的烟料，极为有名。后世因隃麋产墨上佳，故往往在所制的墨品上冠以“古隃麋”名称或图案，以示夸耀。

三国大书法家韦诞（字仲将）是一位制墨高手，他在墨内配入珍珠、麝香等香料，捣细后下于铁臼中，再捣三万杵，使之质理坚细，因而制品极受人推崇，谓“仲将之墨，一点如漆”，时与张芝笔、左伯纸并称。

古代烟料除松烟外，还采用桐油烟、石油烟、漆烟等。松烟要取年久的松树，其色泽肥腻，性质沉重，墨品色黑体轻，宜书不宜画，墨上常标以“松烟”、“松煤”。桐烟取油桐子，质好量大，墨品色紫体重，宜书宜画，墨上常标以“贡烟”、“顶烟”、“超顶烟”、“五石清烟”、“五石油烟”等。墨中加入的合墨香药有犀角、黄金、丹砂、藤黄、芙蓉花、冰片等，十分考究。