

顾坤伯中国画集

Gu Kunbo's Paintings

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顾坤伯

(1905—1970 年)

简介

顾坤伯(1905—1970年) 曾名乙，字景峰，号二泉居士，别署坤庐。江苏无锡人。中学时代即投江南老画师吴观岱先生门下学画，后入苏州工专、上海美术专科学校学习，毕业后留校执教，两年后又受聘于新华艺专，同时创办奇峰国画函授学院。一九五七年执教于中央美术学院华东分院（后改名浙江美术学院即现中国美术学院）是中国美术学院中国画系新山水画教学的主要奠基者。其为人坦诚淳朴，淡泊平易，艺术造诣极高而又平易近人，深受学生爱戴。

Brief Biography

Gu Kunbo (1905-1970) a native of Wuxi, Jiangsu Province. His previous name was Gu Yi, his aliases were Gu Jingfeng, Erquan Lay Buddhist and Gu Kunlu.He learnt painting under old painter Wu Guandai in Jiangnan when he was in high school. Then he entered Suzhou Industrial College to study civil engineering. After he graduated from Shanghai Art Academy, he was employed by the academy as teacher. Two years later, he was employed by Xinhua Art College.He set up Qifeng Chinese Painting Correspondence College. He became a teacher of Huadong Branch of Central Art Academy (later renamed Zhejiang Art Academy, now named China Art Academy) in 1957. He was one of the main founders of new mountains-and-waters painting teaching in Chinese Painting Department of Central Art Academy. Mr Gu was frank and honest, pure and simple, modest and easy of approach, not hanker after fame and fortune. He had high art achievement while had no habits of famous men. He was deeply loved and esteemed by his students.

序 一

赠顾坤伯先生

楼对南山落木时，兴来泼墨日舒迟。
一图青绿三钱赭，虚处舟行便是诗。
更深煮酒西窗下，笔底刚柔任所之。
画到断崖云水外，千山奇秀墨华滋。

王伯敏 1963年于杭州

Present Mr. Gu Kunbo

When my building faced to the fallen leaves on South Hill,
I began to paint in high spirit.
It was blue-green in the painting with some red,
It was worth being called a poet for painting sails in empty place.

I boiled wine under the west window late at night,
I followed my heart to paint toughly or gently.
When I painted beyond the cliff, clouds and water,
There were thousands of beautiful mountains in my painting.

Wang Bomin
In Hangzhou in 1963

序二

清静淡远 神游天真

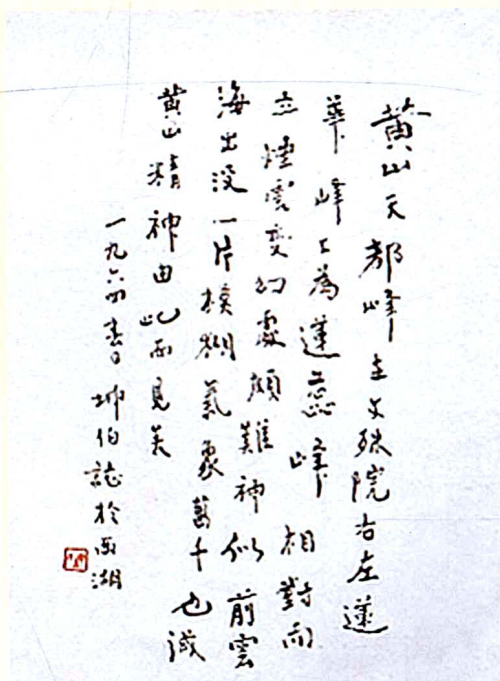
山水画到了晚清，甜熟柔靡，空虚无具。及20世纪，画学复兴，名家辈出，黄宾虹卓然大家，駸駸入于大家者数人，鲜为人知的顾坤伯先生是绝不能逃焉者。

坤伯先生的行实，师兄小坤编有年表，程十发先生尝于1988年为出版的《顾坤伯画集》作序，介绍艺术实践。值先生百年诞辰，以我对先生的山水认识及有关问题撰此小文，以志纪念与敬仰。

一、画无大师

南齐谢赫论画之优劣，裁成六品，唐朱景玄定为四格。后人论画家的成就，或称“大家”，或称“名家”，未有“大师”，书也没有见称为“大师”的。明项穆《书法雅言·品格》因人的“质分高下”、“功有深浅”，就其所造，畧分五等：“正宗尚矣，大家其博，名家其专，正源其谨，傍流其肆。”又在《神化》篇中称：“宣尼、逸少，道统书源，匪不相通。”他心目中的“正宗”唯王羲之一人。如朱履贞所谓：“前举钟张二王，为书法之冠；至此则历代孤绍，专宗右军。”（《书学捷要》）“正宗”，后人又谓“宗师”。宗者，宗派；“宗师”，一宗之尊为师者。“正”者，众宗中视为“正”的，如定儒家为“正统”。总之，“正宗”、“宗师”，实际指向一宗。书有南北，“局于宗王，而不知王不足以该南北”；但王羲之的情况似乎不同，篆分真草，“众体皆能”，并且“天然逸出”，“弈矣奇解”。项穆说：“宰我称仲尼贤于尧、舜，余则谓逸少兼乎钟、张，大统斯垂，万世不易。”钟张是“专擅”，王则“大成已集”，“妙入时中”。“囊括无外，谓之大也”，既广且深，视同“大师”，后人没有大意见，且誉为“书圣”。但不管怎么说，“大师”总不如“宗师”确切，所以项穆终未径称王羲之为大师。

画更复杂得多。画与书，源同而“体”异。书之为道，“性情存乎八法，义理则原乎六书”，“无他术也”（明朱同《覆瓿集》）。画除了用笔用墨，须有写形结体的技法，更有无法之法：“外师造化，未尝定为何法何法也；内得心源，不言得之某氏某氏。”（明王绂《书画传习



顾坤伯书法作品

录》)出形象之表者即用笔用墨之法有标准,“取乎形象”的方法,虽有法,而无定法。古人画分十三科,“未有独任一见而得万物之兼,情备诸体而擅众作之美”(宋刘学箕《方是闲居士小稿》)。且时势推移,质以代兴,工用多变,不可能以一宗统天下。因此,传统画论画史,有文人、士夫、作家、工匠之别,或谓“立宗”“开派”,称“祖”称“开山”,或品为大家、名家、大名家、小名家,而未有“大师”的称谓,因实不能有大师也。如唐王维,“工画山水,体涉古今”,一种“傅色古艳,界画纤细,布置精奇”,“类李将军一派画法”,一种水墨山水“踪似吴生,而风致标格特出”;《历代名画记》评曰:“……原野簇成,远树过于朴拙,复务细巧,翻更失真。”《旧唐书》说他“书画特臻其妙,笔踪措思,参于造化,而创意经图,即有所缺”。后来董其昌仅以水墨山水定他为南宗之祖,精工富丽的“北宗”仍以李思训父子为模范。南唐董源,“水墨类王维,着色如李思训”。更有米芾推为“近世神品,格高无与比”的“平淡天真”的江南山水一格,精而多能,与荆、关、李、范以及米家父子、李、刘、马、夏,以至元季赵孟頫、黄公望、倪云林、吴镇,明季戴进、沈周、文徵明、唐寅、仇英等,一皆称之为“大家”,未有见称“大师”的。

为了清楚“画无大师”的理由,不妨参考项穆对正宗、大家、名家的区分:

会古通今,不激不厉,规矩谙练,骨态清和,众体兼能,天然逸出,巍然端雅,弈矣奇解。此谓大成已集,妙入时中,继往开来,永垂模轨,一之正宗也。

篆隶章草,种种皆知,执使转用,优优合度,数点众画,形质顿殊,各字终篇,势态迥别,脱胎易骨,变相改观。犹之世禄巨室,方室盈藏,时出具陈,焕惊神目,二之大家也。

真行诸体,彼劣此优,速劲迟工,清秀丰丽,或鼓骨格,或炫标姿,意气不同,性真悉露。譬之医卜相术,声誉广驰,本色偏工,艺成独步,三之名家也。

现时动即称大师、大大师。然欤否欤?“大师”可以是对一个人的尊称,却不能滥用于艺术评价。如以项穆的界限,量山水画的实际,负现时之“名”者,“实”须降下一等甚至二等,即称大师而实为大家的,不过数人,而大都属名家;称大家的大都属名家,称名家的只能是入流,甚至不入流。

画无大师。以知名度最大的张大千先生为例。大千先生画兼山水、人物、花鸟,工笔青绿、水墨写意皆能。其中品格最高者工笔花鸟,技法不能越出宋、明画院画工;写意荷花近俗;山水模仿石涛者佳,至有造假以乱人眼目,自运者多在能、妙之间,尚乏新趣。最有个人面目的泼墨,唐王洽已经有过。泼墨画法,因最权威的史家、鉴赏家张彦远的一言:“……不见笔纵,故不谓之画。如山水家之泼墨,亦不谓之画,不堪仿效”而匿迹,自有深理。盖表现形式为绘画的实体。一种绘画,以文化价值为核心形成特殊风格而独立,而臻高度。中国画“以骨为质”,“墨从笔

出”的形式特质，一经彦远点出，泼墨于是不行。现今“水墨”时兴，但不论“解构”、“重组”抑或“洗牌”，如不具此特质，即为“边缘”、“另类”。宾虹先生有言：“堂堂之阵，正正之旗，中国有人，决不让步。”(《弈通》)这是自知、自尊，而非自大、自居。大千先生的泼墨泼彩山水，大都用笔平扁少意趣，笔自为笔，墨色自为墨色的毛病也颇明显。综观大千先生之作，气格、造诣，称为大师，实难令人首肯。明何良俊说，能辨真贋者，“盖千百中或四五人而已”(《四友斋画论》)。今日书画愈见普及，鉴赏则每况愈下，“品位”讲空，耳以代目，“千百”或更当以百千倍之，良可叹息。

二、顾先生晚年之作，駸駸入于大家

但画有大家。我于“大家”的标准，用宾虹先生两句话，一曰：“绘事惟创意为难，如其成就，古今相师，所不讳也。”一曰：“艺成勉强，道合自然。”有劲力，见性情，能创意，达到了“自然”的高度，是为大家。

画的“功力”，表现在艺术创造活动(或曰“发现”)的结果，而不仅仅是画家必须具备的条件。此所以王国维论王石谷“但以用力甚深之故，故摹古则优而自运则劣”，断为“第三流”。中国画的艺术道路，师古人，师造化，又“须以自己之心性体貌，融会贯通于手中”(潘天寿《黄宾虹先生简介》)。大家者，技于进道，得造化之自然，合于画之自然，出画家之自然。顾坤伯先生晚年之作，不愧为大家矣。

大概先生45岁前的作品，已由能品进于妙品，如宾虹先生所谓：“明乎用笔、用墨，兼考源流派别，谙练各家，以求章法，曲传神趣”(《画法要旨》)。先生13岁投江南老画师吴观岱学画，以后又得陈迦盦指授，初学王石谷、恽南田，继学沈石田、文徵明、唐六如。又涉猎宋元诸大家，融江贯通，结体整严，而以“水上飘”的笔法，成一家气味。用笔如水上飘者，空中落笔，着纸运动如波澜起伏，连续不断，力实气空，平而生变，盖得之于石田的苍劲而去其枯老，与南田、新罗的流动秀发，相参无碍，成清沉雅健的风格，虽由人力，实本天机。故先生中年之作规模古制，而意气不同，性真毕露，的然名家。解放以后，值提倡“现实主义”的机遇，多次外出写生，或带学生深入生活，北至幽燕、内蒙、大兴安岭，江南则雁荡、天台、新安、富春、黄山、太湖，既师古人，又得江山之助；晚年简朴生活之外，唯心仪弘一的高标静净，室内张挂法师所书“宁静致远”小横幅及一对联，终日为伴，游心象外，艺境臻于自然。略举四端：

一、仿作。《惠山夜泛》、《古城河口号》、《黄山汤池》、《山水团扇》，系仿石涛、梅清、文徵明作品，后三件是在教室为学生示范而作，章法同而笔情墨趣迥然出于自家。《惠山》端重浑厚，坡陀承接深远，烟岚远山一气充沛，落笔落墨，沉着痛快，真大手笔；《古城河》笔致墨

法，磊磊落落，沉凝中寓爽朗；《汤池》则圆劲秀穆，洗尽纵横习气，笔墨精神，都不让原作，或有过之。

二、写生。近代山水写生，我得三家。李可染先生写境，沁人心脾，开时代之新风。傅抱石先生大笔点染，粗中有细，豪气慑人。顾先生则变化多端：《金山采石矿工地》繁复周密，清润高华，如良玉生烟；《芦茨写生》含滋蕴彩，风神凝远，至简笔如《芦茨埠头》、《钓台小景》、《江边》，独得简贵，南田所谓“洗尽尘滓，独存孤迥，烟环翠黛，敛容而退”，骨格精练，纵横入手幽淡。

三、近代写黄山，卓然者二家：宾虹先生浑厚华滋，离形得神，不待多言矣；坤伯先生游心鸿蒙，“回到创作手段的根源上去”(法·罗郎·巴特《写作的零度》)，意到笔随，不在似不在不似，只觉黄山理当如是。利落尽致的迎客松，峰峦层叠的北海，清润华秀的耕云峰，以及云海之浩荡、屯聚，不过先生之所乘所驱，岂复与论法式及巧拙哉！老子曰：“为学日益，为道日损。”刘熙哉曰：“书当造乎自然。蔡中朗谓书肇于自然，此立天定人，尚未及乎由人复天也。”(《艺概》)悟此两语，可以观先生笔下之黄山。

四、坤伯先生晚年患中风，极少言谈，论画只许一“厚”字。喜龚半千之积墨与吕半隐(潜)之善画空处，画不择笔，各极其趣，骨力充盈，至于潜伏不露，不见烂漫之迹。《富春暮靄》破锋使转，风度洒落，如太白所云：“落叶聚还散，寒鸦栖复惊。”《雁荡天柱峰》从容落墨，运笔翻旋回带，谨严通脱，丘壑无多，浑灏幽深，清淳圆融，可与石田《雨意山水》并驾。先生善擦法。擦笔盛于元季，清王原祁为极致，所谓活脱松秀，元气浑沦。先生以取清空，令林峦氤氲之气、苍翠之风，千岩万壑不能过，如《回望天都》、《黄山玉柱峰》之沉厚而疏宕高渺，恐半千起而见之，翻觉已作层层积染，用力太过。

顾坤伯先生1961年得病，1970年去世，享年仅六十又六，作品遂少，但艺术的高度不因量少而损减。即上述所举之十余幅，戛戛独造，亦可以傲视画坛矣。脱尘境而与天游，无意为佳，“以无累之神，合有道之器”，清静淡远，纯穆自然的品格，必将随画册的再次出版而被愈来愈多的具眼者所赏识。

童中焘 2004年7月于杭州之快雨楼

序 三

顾坤伯的山水画艺术

我第一次看到顾老师的印象是：他是一位中年的山水画课的老师，并不像当时社会上一些故作姿态的名画家，摆出名流的架子。我觉得顾老师太平凡了，而当了解到他的为人和画艺后，从这平凡中呈现的不平凡，更加使人敬佩。

我1938年进上海美术专科学校国画系学习。当时顾老师执教山水，着重基础教学。他要求我们临摹的范本很难，当然，临摹真迹是没有条件，使用的都是珂罗版黑白印刷品。有的同学临的是清代“四王、吴、恽”，还有的临清代“四高僧”，甚至临摹唐、宋、元、明诸大家作品中的也有。青年学生比较调皮，有的只临了一个轮廓就请老师修改，但我们的顾老师不管是什么流派总把学生的习作认真修改到底，从中充分体现了他精熟的各种流派的功力。一个画家能如此广泛地集古人众家之长，实在是少见。因此，已故国画大师潘天寿曾说：“顾先生功力之深，吾所不及。”

顾老师不仅熟悉古人，而且尊重今人。当学生临摹当代画家作品需要辅导时，他照样仿照同行的风格笔法加以修改，没有一点文人相轻的恶习。他这种“不薄今人爱古人”的治学态度，一直受到我们做学生的尊敬。

从往事的回想中回到顾老师作品的面前，我深切地感到，他的画不是深海的狂涛，而是江上的清风，那么的平静，那么的恬淡。大家知道，美的追求与表现，因各人的性格、修养不同，而不能强求一律。画如其人，作品正是人品与画艺统一的结晶。世界上追求骇世惊人的画风易，而欲造平淡天真的境界难。在当时的社会里，你要“骇世惊人”，必须要有相应的各种条件，那种莫名其妙的惊人之笔，非要社会上莫名其妙的人的支持不可，否则就要遭人白眼，非赶出这个“美”的“王国”不可。而顾老师这种恬淡的风格所以能确立，还是因为他的人品高洁、画艺深厚，才能达到“不激不厉，风规自远”的境地，在那个时代中是多么的难能可贵。

在离上海美专不远的地方，有一所国画函授学校，创办人之一也是顾老师。当时顾老师很清寒，仅靠美专的薪金是难以维持一家的生计。自办函授学校，一方面是为了补贴一点家庭的费用，另一方面更重要的是有利于国画艺术的传播。确实，在时局艰难、空气混浊的“孤岛”上海租界，顾老师与张天奇先生创办这所函授学校，通过传授国画技法，起到了引导青年人对祖国艺术的追求和热爱的作用，在“十里洋场朱门酒肉臭”的混沌世界中，竟然散发出一缕清芬的翰墨之气，令人弥觉珍贵。当时，我也曾去函授学校参观过，顾老师并不把我当作一个青年学生，而以一位“老友”来接待。有一次，他指着墙上一幅王陶明先生的花鸟画无限感慨地说：“这画

画得格调多高，可惜不为世重，奈何！奈何！”的确，王陶明先生的简笔，十分简练，造型也极有个性，颇有大家风度。顾老师的议论，正抒发了当时社会上一班虽有真才实学而拙于生计，却又不愿奔走权门的穷画家的心声。顾老师就是这样走在以画谋生与以教画谋生的清苦道路。

1950年后，顾老师全家迁居苏州。1956年夏，我作为北京一位老画家的陪同人员到顾老师家去作访问。那是一个晚上，一眼看到的是挂在墙上的许多写生作品。从中可以明显地感到，在他那清风明月般的风格中融入了新的人间感情，体现出他对新生活的赞歌和希望。这一次，他所发的不是对王陶明先生的无限感慨，而是在向未来广阔道路上与同行们奔驰前进的期望。顾老师确实看到了自己的命运与新世纪的命运想契合的新起点。后来，我于1962年任浙江美术学院客座教授时，去探望过一次，可惜他已患了高血压的病症。多病之身过早地限制了他旺盛的创作热情，但我知道他一直关心着国画新人的成长，一些老笔纷披的作品也产生在这个阶段。

经过了那个不平凡的十年，我才知道顾老师已经病故了，令人缅怀不已。幸运的是我还是看到了他不少作品。当然，当年顾老师对我的教导是那么多，而我对老师认识却是那么浅，但这些印象与感想都是真实的，我对老师的崇敬和思念是老而弥笃的。

顾坤伯老师字景峰，号二泉居士，江苏无锡人，生于1905年。中学时代，他即投江南老画师吴观岱先生门下学画。后入苏州工专土木科学习建筑，又得该校国画老教陈迦盦先生的指点。1925年自上海美术专科学校毕业后留校执教，两年后又受聘于新华艺专，1957年应中央美术学院华东分院的邀聘任教至1970年去世，时年66岁。

作为他的学生，今天我又有机会重瞻老师各个时期的作品，十分高兴。在此我把我自己的感想作为学习一得，请读者指正。概括顾老师的作品，可以明显地看出早、中、晚三个不同时期的画风递变。

早期是向古人学习。从顾老师简洁有力的笔法来看，无疑主要得力于明代的沈周和文徵明，颇有“吴门派”的神韵。沈、文重勾勒，而顾老师曾学土木工程，讲究结构的严谨，刚好与理解造型勾勒的画理相通。在此基础上，顾老师以广泛涉猎了宋、元、明、清各大家的笔墨，都能加以融会贯通。因此，他继承之广、面目之多，为当代山水画家中所少见。从这个时期中可以看出他深厚的基本功力和对传统的深入理解能力，这一直影响着他以后的艺术创造。

中期是向造化学习。顾老师曾到黄山、雁荡、新安江、大兴安岭诸名山大川写生。他的写生作品，中西互用，融古化今，自出新意，显示了十分高明的写生技巧。而且，因为在写生中善于对不同意境的追求，作品有虚实契合之妙。此时期标致着他的画艺已摆脱了前人的束缚，从而形成了自己独特的清雅俊逸的风格。这是他几十年深厚素养的升华。

顾老师晚期的作品能独创新风，笔墨的淋漓酣畅、构图的随意生发，把清雅俊逸之韵与雄奇浑厚之概融成一体，真是刚柔相济，相得益彰。在他的作品中，往往在高超的笔墨技法之外，使人感到一种美的崇高意境，意味无穷……。可惜，在顾老师正向艺术高峰迈进的时候，因病离开了人间。

回顾老师的一生艺术生涯，正处在中国现代美术史上承上启下的重要时刻。作为一位杰出的中国画家和卓越的中国画教育家，他用自己的创作实践，给现代中国画家作了开辟道路的示范，顾坤伯老师这一功绩是永远不会泯灭的。

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Tranquil and Pure, Simply but Meaningful

Traditional Chinese painting of mountains and waters were sweet and skilled, gentle and extravagant, while really void in the late Qing Dynasty. Up to the 20th century, paintings were revived and a large number of masters came to the fore. Huang Binhong was a master with outstanding achievements. Rapidly, some painters became masters. Mr. Gu Kunbo was little known, but he was among them without any doubt.

Mr. Xiaokun compiled Mr. Gu's chronological list to introduce his life. Mr. Cheng Shifa wrote the preface of *Gu Kunbo's Art Collection* in 1988 and he introduced Mr. Gu's art in this article. It happened to be the 100th anniversary of Mr. Gu's birthday, I wrote this article according to my understanding for Mr. Gu's mountains-and-waters paintings and related problems, to express our memories and revering to Mr. Gu.

I. There Is No Great Master Painter

Xie He of South Qi commented on paintings and made the standard of six classes, then Zhu Jingxuan of Tang Dynasty made the standard of four classes. Later generations commented on the achievements of painters, some called "master painter", some called "famous master", while none called "great master". There were no great master calligraphers. Xiang Mu of Ming Dynasty wrote in his *Elegant Words on Calligraphy • Style and Class* as follows: because men's intelligence and skill were different, according calligraphers' achievements, their calligraphy could be commented on by five classes: "the ones of classical masters are lofty, the ones of masters are rich, the ones of famous calligraphers are special, the ones of authentic calligraphers are serious, the ones of calligraphers of side class are bold." He thought only Wang Xizhi was among the classical masters. Zhu Luzhen had said: "Zhong You, Zhang Xu, Wang Xizhi and Wang Xianzhi were the best calligraphers, then the later generations only thought Wang Xizhi as the classical master."(*The Essentials of Calligraphy*)The classical master was called "master calligrapher" by the later generations, which were the honorific title for the master of a school of calligraphy. In fact, the "classical master" or the "master" was the "classical master" or the "master" in a school. There were North and South factions of calligraphy, while the classical masters and the masters were not the representatives of both North and South factions except Wang Xizhi. He was excellent in each category of calligraphy with his natural and elegant style.

So Xiang Mu said that Zhong You and Zhang Xu were "special"; Wang Xizhi epitomized the achievements of classical calligraphy and he was called "calligrapher among calligraphers". But Xiang Mu never called Wang as "great master".

Painting was more complex than calligraphy. Painting and calligraphy had the same origin source while different carriers. To calligraphy, "Temperaments exist in the eight standards, meanings and significances come from the six categories", "without any other mode" (Zhu Quan of Ming Dynasty). Painting needed brush pen, Chinese ink and skills of painting, besides the mode of no mode: "Learning from the Nature outside, there is no changeless mode; coming from one's heart inside, there is no modes from someone" (Wang Ba of Ming Dynasty: *The Records of Learning Painting and Calligraphy*); "Coming from the appearance of the image" meant that there was standards of using brush and ink, while "adopt the image" meant there was no changeless mode. The ancient calssified the painting to thirteen categories, while there was no one who could be good at all of them. As time passed, none of the schools could become the ruler of the painting circle. So in the traditional painting history, there was distinct of scholars, officials, painters and artisans; or someone were the founders or originators of the schools; or there were titles of master, famous painter, big famous painter, little famous painter; while there were never "great masters". There were really no great masters. For example Wang Wei, "he was well versed in painting of mountains and waters in the ancient and modern styles", "the colors of his paintings all were classically gorgeous, his Jiehua were slender and beautiful with good composition", "similar to General Li's style"; his mountains and waters in wash painting "similar to Mr. Wu, while with outstanding grace and charming". Zhang Yanyuan commented on him in his *The Records of All of Famous Paintings* as follows: "...the trees in distance were too simply and clumsy, the complex one should be exquisite, the imitated were anamorphic." According to *Old History of Tang*, "his painting and calligraphy attains wonder, his using brush is from the Nature, while he is lack of originality." Dong Qichang assessed Wan Wei as the founder of South School according to Wang's mountains and waters in wash painting, Li Sixun and his son were still the models of North school. Dong Yuan of South Tang, "his mountains and waters were similar to Wang Wei's, his using colors was similar to Li Sixun's". The Jiangnan school of mountains and waters was estimated "ingenous works, incomparable style" by Mi Fu. Furthermore, there were Mi Fu and his son, Zhao Mengfu, Huang Gongwang, Wang Meng, Ni Yunlin, Wu Zhen, Dai Jin, Shen Zhou, Wen Zhengming, Tang Yin, Qiu Ying and so forth, who were all called "masters", none of them had the title

of "great master".

There is no great master painter, in the similar reason of Xiang Mu's distinguishing the classical master, the master and the famous calligrapher in calligraphy. Now, being master is easy. Yes or no? "Master" could be an honorific title for a person, but couldn't be used indiscriminately. According to Xiang Mu's standards, the painters with the titles should decrease one or two class. In fact, those who are called "great masters", only some of them are masters, while most of them are famous painters; most of those called masters are just famous painters, those called famous painters are just qualified, even not qualified.

There is no great master painter. Take Mr. Zhang Daqian, the most famous one, as example: Mr. Zhang was good at all the mountains-and-waters painting, figure painting, flowers-and-birds painting, blue-and-green painting and freehand brushwork in wash painting. Among the categories of painting, his flowers-and-birds painting made with fine and delicate strokes were of the highest quality, while were not able to surpass the skills of painters of Painting Academy of Song and Ming; his imitations of Shi Tao's mountains and waters were excellent, even difficult to tell the fake from the real ones, while the ones he himself created were between the able and the wonderful, lack of origination. His splash-ink was of his unique style, while Wang Qia of Tang Dynasty had used the technique. Zhang Yanyuan, the authority of art history and connoisseur said about the splash-ink as follows: "...no strokes, so not called painting. The mountains-and-waters painters' splash-ink works were not paintings too, and were not worth imitating." So splash-ink went into hiding. The form of expression was the substance of painting. A kind of painting was unique and had its high quality because of its own style taking culture value as the core. Zhang Yanyuan pointed that Chinese painting's special characteristic of form was "spirit is essence" "strokes come from brush", so splash-ink couldn't be used. Wash painting is popular now. In spite of "deconstruction" "recomposition" or "ruffling", all that have no Chinese painting's special characteristic of form are "marginal" "other". Mr. Huang Binhong had said: "magnificent battle formation, formidable flag. There are men in China who never give in." (Survey of Chess) Mr. Huang's words are of self-knowledge and self-respect, without arrogance or self-praise. Most of Mr. Daqian's mountains and waters in splash-ink were of middling skill and short of temperament and taste, the shortness of strokes being only strokes and ink being only ink was obvious. In a panoramic view of Mr. Daqian's works, his style, taste and attainments were not able to let all the people accept him as a great master. He Liangjun of Ming said that the

people who had the ability of distinguishing the fake from the real one, "maybe there were four or five among thousands of people"(Comments on Paintings of Siyouzhai). Now painting and calligraphy are widespread, but ability of appreciation gets steadily worse. The "quality" becomes empty talk and people appreciate paintings by listening instead of looking. What a pity!

II. Mr. Gu's Works in His Old Age Made Him A Great Master Rapidly

In fact there are great master painters. My standard of "great master" is as same as Mr. Binhong's words: "To painting, only origination is difficult. If one is able to break fresh ground, he is more excellent than the ancient and modern masters." "Good skills come from hard work, doctrine is in conformity with the Nature." The great master should be well grounded in painting, show his real temperament, has ability of origination and reach the high plane of "Nature".

The "efficacy" of painting is the expression of the result of creation(or "found"), while not the essential condition for painters. So Wang Guowei commented Wang Shigu as the third class, for "his works imitating the ancient paintings were of high-quality while the ones he himself created were of low-quality because he worked really hard". The traditional Chinese painting, learnt from the ancient painters, from the Nature, and "must digest what he has learnt when he is painting, according his own temperament and appearance"(Pan Tianshou: Brief Introduction to Mr. Huang Binhong). The great master can improve his skill according to the doctrine, gets the nature of the Nature, is in conformity with the nature of painting, shows the nature of a painter. Mr. Gu Kunbo's works in his old age were worthy of the title of master.

Mr. Gu's works had reached the realm of wonder before he was 45 years old. Mr. Huang Binhong said: "grasp how to use the brush and ink, study the headstream and genres of painting, be well versed in all the schools, then get the art composition and express the charm and taste."(The Essentials of Painting Skills) Mr. Gu learned from painter Wu Guandai when he was 13 years old, later Chen Mo also taught him. At first he imitated Wang Shigu and Yun Nantian, then Shen Shitian, Wen Zhengming and Tang Liuru. He made an extensive study of masters of Song and Yuan, knew how to digest and use what he studied, set up his whole precise painting system, then he developed his own style by his "floating" skill. When he was painting, his using brush was like floating over the water, he put brush to the rice paper in the air, the movement of brush on the rice paper was like waves rising and falling, successive without break, full of power while spirit in the air, full of changes