

Research on the Origin and Development of Duan Yan Shan Shui Inkstone Style

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Abstract: Duan inkstone is the first of the four famous inkstones in China, with high practical and artistic value. This article takes the landscape inkstone style in Duan Yan as the research object, analyzes the development characteristics of landscape inkstones in different historical periods, attempts to clarify the definition of landscape inkstones, and explores their development origins, technical inheritance, and internal cultural logic and connotation, in order to provide new perspectives and paradigms for the study of Duan Yan landscape inkstones.

Keywords: Duan Yan; Shanshui Inkstone; Source and Flow; The Turn of the Times.

1. Introduction

Duanxi inkstone, also known as Duanxi inkstone, is the first of the four famous inkstones in China. It is produced in the Lingyang Gorge area in the eastern suburbs of Zhaoqing City (formerly known as Duanzhou), Guangdong Province. Duan Yan was first born during the Wude period of the Tang Dynasty (618-626 AD) [1]. After more than 1300 years of historical development, it has always been highly praised by literati and ink artists. Its inkstone decoration has also grown from scratch, from simplicity to complexity, gradually forming various types of decorative categories of Duan Yan. Among them, landscape patterns are a prominent type of decoration, and this type of inkstone is called "landscape inkstone". It has gone through a development process from scratch and gradually enriched and prospered. Today, this inkstone style has become one of the most important inkstone styles, deeply loved and respected by people. When did such an important inkstone style originate and what evolution process did it go through? However, there has been no precise research, only scattered opinions, such as Liu Shaogang's "The Four Treasures of Ancient Chinese Study", which involves the concept and artistic conception of Wang Xiujun, a famous inkstone craftsman in the Qing Dynasty, carving landscape inkstones; Wu Rongkai and Guo Bing discussed the carving techniques of landscape inkstones in their book "Chinese Inkstone Culture Inkstone Carving"; Furthermore, contemporary scholar Luo Ligang has provided a brilliant definition of landscape inkstone in his book "Purple Jade Shining Zhaoqing Duan Inkstone".

In the late 1970s, Mr. Liu Yanliang made the following statement about the decorative patterns of Tang Dynasty Duan inkstones in his book "Duanxi Famous Inkstone": "During the mid Tang Dynasty, Duan inkstones gradually developed from practical products to practical crafts that combine appreciation and practicality. Duan inkstone artists began to carve simple lines and patterns at the head of the inkstone pool, mainly focusing on landscape, flower and bird patterns, and antique patterns." [2] This statement was pointed out by the famous scholar Mr. Shang Chengzuo: "As far as we can see, we have not yet seen Tang Duan inkstones with landscape, flower and bird patterns during this period." [3] Mr. Shang Chengzuo is an expert in ancient texts and archaeology, and

he judged based on his past research and judgment. Mr. Liu Yanliang's viewpoint is not appropriate. Mr. Liu Yanliang did not provide effective evidence for this in his book, resulting in this discussion remaining unresolved.

2. Definition of Shanshui Inkstone Style

When did the Shanshui inkstone style begin? It is necessary to first clarify how to define the style of landscape inkstone. From the discussion and analysis of Mr. Chengzuo, a former writer, on the Tang Duan inkstone with landscape, flower and bird patterns, it should refer to the decoration of Duan inkstone with landscape, flower and bird patterns. Ms. Cai Hongru, an expert in the identification of ancient inkstones, carefully used double quotation marks to frame the word "landscape" in her article "A Brief Discussion on the Art of Engraving Inkstones in the Qing Dynasty: Also Discussing Several "Landscape" Inkstones" included in the publication "Duoyun" in the mid-1980s, instead of directly describing it as "Shanshui Inkstone". She also introduced several works decorated with landscape patterns in the article [4], which is consistent with Mr. Shang Chengzuo's viewpoint. But when introducing Wang Xiujun's works in the following section, it is directly named "Wang Xiu Jun Shan Shui Yan" [5]. From the author's description of this inkstone, he believes that "the patterns on this inkstone, from the rubbings, are two ink landscape paintings. The author organically combines painting and carving, and ink and brush can be seen in the knife." [6] From this, it can be seen that Ms. Cai Hongru emphasized the painting nature of the inkstone carving landscape patterns when appreciating this inkstone, with the meaning of using the knife instead of the pen, so she gave it the name "Mountain Water Inkstone". Contemporary scholar Mr. Luo Ligang, in his description of the landscape inkstone style, believes that using landscape patterns as decoration is very common in modern Duan inkstones, and is specifically referred to as "landscape inkstones" [7] in the inkstone industry. From this, it can be seen that the three gentlemen have basically the same view on the type of inkstone decorated with landscape patterns. However, Ms. Cai Hongru questioned Liu Yanliang during Mr. Shang Chengzuo's speech, and the name "landscape inkstone" was already in use around

the same time, but it needs to be defined according to the specific object. Mr. Luo Ligang gave a broader definition of "landscape inkstone", and as long as the inkstone carved with landscape patterns can be called "landscape inkstone", this view has become a widely recognized consensus in the contemporary inkstone industry.

And whether earlier history gave a name to the landscape inkstone style requires an examination of inkstone history. Considered as the first monograph on Duan Yan, the "Duan Xi Yan Pu" written by an anonymous author in the Song Dynasty listed the "Inkstone Form" column, listing 48 existing styles of Duan Yan forms at that time:

The shape of inkstone: it is called flat bottomed wind character, foot shaped wind character, hanging skirt wind character, ancient style wind character, phoenix pond, four straight characters, ancient style four straight characters, double brocade four straight characters, acacia four straight characters, basket shaped characters, axe shaped characters, melon shaped characters, egg shaped characters, wall shaped characters, human face, lotus shaped characters, lotus leaf shaped characters, immortal peach shaped characters, ladle shaped characters, ding shaped characters, jade platform shaped characters, Tianyan shaped characters (Dongpo tasted stones without axes and chisels for research, and later generations found natural and smooth ones to follow), toad shaped characters, turtle shaped characters, curved water shaped characters, bell shaped characters, and Gui shaped characters. Samples, such as Hu sample, Suo sample, Qin sample, Ao sample, Shuangyu sample, Tuan sample, Ba Leng Bing inkstone, Ba Leng Bing inkstone, Zhu Jie Bing inkstone, Inkstone brick, Inkstone board, Fang Xiang sample, Pipa sample, Yue sample, Yao Yao sample, Ma Ji, Yue Chi, Ruan sample, She sample, Lv sample, Qin Zu Feng character, It's like Penglai.[8]

From these names, it can be seen that during the Song Dynasty, the names were mainly based on the corresponding form of the inkstone, and were not named based on the main decoration on the inkstone. Of course, there were also a few names such as "Penglai style" that should have been named based on the main content of the decoration, but they were only isolated cases. The naming of inkstones in the form of inkstones is related to their function and early development, because inkstones first meet the needs of grinding and writing, and decoration is attached to the form. Therefore, the decoration of inkstones did not receive much attention in the early development. "Most ancient landscape inkstones were composed on regular geometric inkstones, and the patterns were generally arranged on the side or even the back of the inkstone to avoid hindering practicality.[9] Mr. Luo Ligang also believes that the arrangement of patterns and decorations on ancient inkstones is mainly subject to the practicality of the inkstone. Therefore, the naming method based on form in the "Duan Xi Yan Pu" was basically used in various dynasties of the Yuan, Ming, and Qing dynasties. Even before the Qing Dynasty, there was no clear title given to inkstones decorated with landscape patterns, and they all appeared as inkstones engraved with a certain theme of landscape patterns. But the landscape inkstone screen, which was used to "place it at the end of the inkstone to block wind and dust"[10], had already been sung by Wen Tong in the Song Dynasty. Although it is different from the landscape inkstone, it is also a "close relative". One of the Five Masterpieces of Poetry in his poem "Early Autumn Landscape Inkstone Screen" [11] has been passed down to this day. The poem goes: "The evening mist

separates the distant Xiushan, and autumn flows into the flat forest. The square plain is only a foot long, and the rock valley can be deep." The poem depicts the dynamic autumn forest and evening scenery, with a peaceful and distant landscape. Zhao Xihu of the Southern Song Dynasty, in his book "Dongtian Qinglu: Ink Screen Discrimination" stated: "In ancient times, there were no inkstone screens. Or engraved inkstones, they were mostly engraved on the bottom and sides of the inkstone. Inkstone screens were first made from Dongpo and the valley, and were inscribed on the inkstone and carved on the screen to indicate their appearance." [12] He believed that there were no inkstone screens before Su Dongpo and Huang Tingjian. Therefore, the author of the book "The Interest in Calligraphy and Painting and the Appreciation of Recitation: A New Exploration of Wen Tong's Poetry and Art" also believes that the landscape inkstone screen recited in Wen Tong's poem should be a picture of Song Di's early autumn landscape mounted on a screen blocking the wind and dust.[13] In addition, Xie Hong of the Northern Song Dynasty wrote "Two Poems of Cai Shizhi's Landscape Inkstone Screen Paintings"[14], which to some extent indicates that at that time, landscape inkstone screens were mostly painted on silk. At the same time, Zhao Xihu also affirmed the preference for making inkstone screens and inscriptions since Su Dongpo, Huang Tingjian, and others. From the inkstone screens depicted in paintings by Ming Dynasty painters such as Xie Huan's "Apricot Garden Elegant Collection Picture" and Du Jin's "The Screen of the Eighteen Scholars", it is evident that literati in the Northern Song Dynasty had a great appreciation for landscape inkstone screens. Of course, most inkstone screens are not carved with inkstone or the natural texture of the stone used. However, it can be seen that incorporating landscape themes into stone decoration and carving was no longer an isolated phenomenon during the Northern Song Dynasty, and it showed a high aesthetic requirement. This situation was already reflected in the inkstone screens used as auxiliary inkstones. How could literati and inkstone artists not appreciate and carve inkstones, which are important tools in the literary world? Although inkstone screens are more aesthetically pleasing than inkstones, the incorporation of landscape patterns into inkstones should have met the conditions of the times.

From the above scholars' discussion and analysis of the Shanshui inkstone style, as well as the examination of the Northern Song Dynasty inkstone notation, it can be seen that Professor Luo Ligang's definition of Shanshui inkstone style can better cover various forms of this inkstone style. Decorating with landscape patterns can be considered as Shanshui inkstone. Of course, there is a certain degree of uncertainty in the classification of this type of boundary due to the number of themes appearing in the inkstone and the themes that the inkstone maker wants to express. For example, if one inkstone has more characters and fewer mountains and waters, it is closer to the character theme inkstone, while the other author often carves birds but has a distant taste in the cold pond environment. This is also the case of the landscape inkstone, which is also a certain animal inkstone. This is similar to the situation encountered in the classification of Chinese painting themes, but this part is not the main subject after all, so it should be judged more accurately based on the specific situation of the main content.

3. Song Dynasty: The Initial Appearance of Duan Yan Shan Shui Inkstone Style

Mr. Luo Ligang once provided a rough timeline for the emergence of the Shanshui inkstone, stating that it had already appeared during the Northern Song Dynasty.[15] However, he did not provide strong evidence for this claim, which requires us to carefully examine the early known Duan inkstones. In the previous section of the "Duan Xi Yan Pu", there is a list of "Penglai style" and it is said that "in the early years of Xuanhe, the imperial court ordered the production of inkstones according to the sample, with the shape resembling the wind and the phoenix pond, but with flat bottomed ears. There are four rings, engraved with seawater, fish dragon, and three divine mountains. The pond is in the shape of Kunlun, with the sun on the left and the moon on the right, and stars listed for use by the Imperial Secretariat." [16] This refers to the imperial court's order in the early years of Xuanhe to produce inkstones according to the sample, with the style resembling the phoenix pond. In the image carving of the inkstone platform, it is clearly stated that there are seawater, fish dragon, and three divine mountains (there are three divine mountains in the sea, named Penglai, Fangzhang, Yingzhou, and Xianju Zhi. "Records of the Grand Historian: Annals of Qin Shi Huang"), the water pool is shaped like Kunlun, with the appearance of the sun and moon, and stars lining it. From the description of this inkstone, it can be seen that most of the patterns used in decoration are landscape elements, with only animal fish and dragons appearing faintly. Therefore, we should have no doubt that this inkstone is an early category of landscape inkstone style. Moreover, in the subject matter of Chinese landscape painting, the Penglai theme is also a favorite subject for painters to draw, such as the "Penglai Fairy Society" by Zhao Daheng of the Song Dynasty, and the "Penglai Wonderland Map" by Qiu Ying of the Ming Dynasty. In terms of subject matter, the "Penglai Style" Duan inkstone made by the imperial court is a square mountain water inkstone. In addition, from the design of this inkstone, it can be seen that the political institutions in the late Northern Song Dynasty had already placed great emphasis on the aesthetic of inkstones, not just practicality and decoration, but also in line with the aesthetic taste of mountains and rivers in the Northern Song Dynasty.

However, Mr. Hua Cixiang has a different view on the appearance time of this type of inkstone. He used two Penglai inkstones from the Yuan Dynasty unearthed from the Shanghai Museum as standard tools and examined the surviving Penglai inkstones, including those from the Beijing Palace Museum, Taipei Palace Museum, Tianjin Museum, and other sources. He examined them from four aspects: "The Song Dynasty theory of Penglai inkstones does not match the artistic style of Song inkstones", "The era of sea animal patterns", "The era of fairy mountain and pavilion patterns", and "The inheritance relationship between the collection of Yuan Dynasty Penglai inkstones and the passed down Penglai inkstones". He believed that "the passed down Penglai inkstones were not earlier than the Yuan Dynasty". [17] Although Mr. Hua Cixiang believed that most of the passed down Penglai inkstones were from the Ming Dynasty, However, the author has the following questions about this conclusion: firstly, where did the Penglai inkstone of the Yuan Dynasty come from and should not have been born without reason? Due to the historical background of the abolition of

the imperial examination system in the Yuan Dynasty, the demand and development of inkstones were clearly unfavorable factors. Therefore, the decline in inkstone making skills and the loss of craftsmanship in the Yuan Dynasty were also possible; Secondly, how should we view the imperial palace's creation of the "Penglai style" in the anonymous work "Duan Xi Yan Pu"? Mr. Hua Cixiang cited 48 inkstone styles from "Duan Xi Yan Pu" in his writing, including the "Penglai style", and cited the writing time of the inkstone score as the Southern Song Dynasty [18], which is significantly different from the inferred timeline; Thirdly, if no Penglai inkstone from before the Yuan Dynasty has been found on the ground, does it deny that the Song Dynasty did not have this inkstone style? Fourthly, is it certain that the inkstone unearthed from the Yuan tomb was made during the Yuan Dynasty? Is it possible that it is a relic from the previous dynasty? Even if this is used as a standard, there are only two sides and it does not have universality. The author believes that more unearthed cultural relics are needed to confirm it. Therefore, considering the above factors and in combination with the previous description of the relationship between the landscape inkstone screen and inkstone in the Northern Song Dynasty, it is difficult to imagine that these two direct relatives did not produce any "sparks" or landscape patterns on the inkstone screen for more than 200 years since Wen Tong's poem on the landscape inkstone screen. In addition, Penglai inkstone appeared in records during the late Song Dynasty. Although there are doubts about the preserved Song Dynasty landscape inkstone, various indications suggest that the origin of the landscape inkstone style should be at least equivalent to and earlier than the time when the "Duanxi Inkstone Manual" was written, because it is impossible for the physical object to exist only after the work was published. This should be a consensus on when the landscape inkstone first appeared.

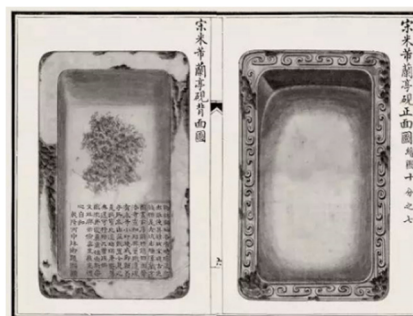


Figure 1. Xiqing Inkstone Painting "Song Mifu Lanting Inkstone"



Figure 2. Side of Song Mifu Lanting Inkstone

The Lanting inkstone is closely related to the Penglai inkstone. Mr. Hua Cixiang believes in the discussion of this theme that "Lanting inkstone is very similar to Penglai

inkstone in terms of shape, quality, and pattern, so it should be two different types of inkstone styles that emerged at the same time." [19], the author agrees with the previous half's view that the two types of inkstone styles are very similar. Although Mr. Hua Cixiang's thoughts are about the surviving Penglai inkstone, the author still agrees that they can be used as a reference to examine its origins. As for the era in which Lanting inkstone emerged, the author still believes that the Song Dynasty theory also had its own historical environment and conditions. The flourishing of painting art in the Song Dynasty was also reflected in the production of inkstones. The Taohe Stone Orchid Pavilion was decorated with embroidered inkstones, and the scene of Wang Xizhi, a calligrapher, and his friend Lanting gathering was carved throughout the body, depicting landscapes, figures, flowers, and birds. It is a poetic and picturesque landscape painting. [20] The high level of excellence reflected in the landscape paintings of the Song Dynasty is a recognized historical fact. This type of subject matter has been passed down to this day, including the painting "Lanting Picture"[21] by an anonymous author of the Song Dynasty and three works of the same name "Xiao Yi Earning Orchid Pavilion Picture"[22]. These Lanting themed works, painted by famous or unknown artists at that time, were already widely circulated in the Song Dynasty, and literati directly participated in painting evaluations. Many literati were also painters, such as Su Dongpo and Mi Fu as representatives, and a group of literati participated in the evaluation of inkstones. Of particular note is the "Song Mifu Lanting Inkstone" (Figures 1 and 2) included in the "Xiqing Inkstone Manual", which is currently housed in the National Palace Museum in Taipei. The material used is Laokengdian stone, and the book states: "The inkstone is surrounded by the text of lying silkworms, and the left side is engraved with the "Lanting Xiu Tie Tu" on the upper side, and the right side is engraved with the "Preface to Lanting" by Mifu on the lower side." [23] Comparing the description in the text with the actual picture, it can be seen that the arrangement of trees, stones, flowing water, pavilions, and characters is quite clever, rhythmic, and the expression of structural textures is also quite mature and natural. The carving technique is exquisite, and the entire inkstone displays elegance and refinement. The solemn literati temperament is a representative Lanting themed landscape inkstone.

In the "Xiqing Research Genealogy", there is also a section called "Song Duan Shi Ruisi Dongge Inkstone" (Figure 5). The Siku Guan officials commented that the side carving is connected to the scenery of mountains and waters, the strokes are simple and ancient, and the scenery is interesting. The two characters "Ma Yuan" are inscribed on the lower part of the running script, and the back of the inkstone covers the hand about four parts deep. The four characters "Ruisi Dongge" are engraved on the middle of the running script, and the inkstone is engraved on the periphery. The pattern in the inkstone was painted by the famous landscape painter Ma Yuan and engraved on the side of the inkstone after the Song Dynasty's southward migration (Figure 4). This inkstone is an end stone with a plain pool, surrounded by landscape patterns on all sides. The majority of the inkstone is painted by landscape painters who add the patterns to the inkstone, which is similar to landscape painting. This evaluation has similarities with Ms. Cai Hongru's appreciation of Wang Xiujun's landscape inkstone. The Qing dynasty verified the authenticity of this inkstone, but contemporary Mr. Wu Ligu believed it to be doubtful. [24] Therefore, based on the previous theory, this

inkstone is still a valuable "landscape inkstone" for research. In addition, the author believes that the "The Song Dynasty Stone Sea and Sky Inkstone" (Figure 3) recorded in the "Xiqing Research Genealogy" is similar in theme to the Penglai inkstone and can be examined under the same category. This will not be elaborated further.



Figure 3. Song Duanshi Haitian Inkstone



Figure 4. Song Duanshi Ruisi Dongge Inkstone Side



Figure 5. Song Duanshi Ruisi Dongge Inkstone Back

From the above discussion, it can be seen that the Penglai inkstone and Lanting inkstone of the Song Dynasty showed a certain development trend in the late Song Dynasty due to their special historical background and cultural needs. For example, the Penglai inkstone was recognized by the management system at that time and was mass-produced in batches, while the Lanting inkstone should have been favored by literati. Only the "Xiqing Research Genealogy" records that there were five Lanting inkstones in the Song Dynasty. Therefore, the emergence of these two inkstone styles played a crucial leading and promoting role in the development of later landscape inkstones.

4. Yuan and Ming Dynasties: The Richness and Development of Duan Yan Shan Shui Inkstone Style

From the beginning of Penglai inkstone and Lanting inkstone in Song Dynasty, the industry of making inkstone in Yuan Dynasty has been stagnant. Although Mr. Wen Hua Tzu

Xiang used Penglai inkstone unearthed in Yuan Dynasty as a standard instrument to discuss this inkstone style, most of the industry believes that the level and development of making inkstone in Yuan Dynasty are the continuation of the Song Dynasty. "Yuandai inkstone is in the low stage", [25] Therefore, the above author doubts the appearance of Penglai inkstone in the Yuan Dynasty.

In the Ming Dynasty, shanshui inkstone developed rapidly. Especially in the middle and late period of the Ming Dynasty, Duaninkstone market showed a new look of prosperity and development, and the shape of Duaninkstone also changed from practicability to both practical and aesthetic direction. The process of manufacturing the Duaninkstone has also been innovative, the shape and style of the Duaninkstone are more complex and diverse, and the decoration is richer, and a considerable part of the literati actively join the design evaluation of the Duaninkstone, whether from the shape theme of the Duaninkstone, or the manufacturing technology has been developed and innovative. As already discussed lanting inkstone, guangdong museum is also in possession of one party in the Ming dynasty "Zhang Xuan Ming Painting LAN Ting Inkstone"[26] (Figure 6), the inkstone in the round, slightly oval. There are nine Yue poem: "Warm wind also valley, gas vibration soft strip, sitting and far think, thin talk travel suburbs." The bottom of the inkstone is covered with a hand depth of 2.5 to 3.8 cm, and the full text of the "Preface to Lanting" is engraved inside, and the section is signed "Wanli Renwu (1582) April Huizhou Zhang Xuan painted in Pingyue". According to the investigation, Zhang Xuan (1553 -- 1636) character Mengqi, no. Jiuyue Mountain. The inkstone head and side of the inkstone are carved with bas-relief and ink-relief techniques (Figure 7). This inkstone carving technique is different from the technique of combining Yin and Yang with bas-relief of Lanting inkstone in the Song Dynasty, which enriches the carving technique of Lanting inkstone to a certain extent.

The other "Zhile Renshou Inkstone" (Figure 8), which is stored in the Guangdong Folk Arts Museum, is a type of inkstone with landscape carving as the main body. The right side of the inkstone is carved with mountain water from top to bottom, the top left is carved with cloud moon, the middle is a small ink stone, and the bottom is engraved with water lines. The inscription on the top right is: "Etymology flows back to the Three Gorges water". Engraved "Wenjia" seal. Inscriptions engraved on the left side of inkstone: "Wisdom, benevolence and longevity". Engraved "mountains and rivers have the sound of silence". On the back is carved a map of mountains and rivers, and on the lower right is carved a picture of an old man playing the piano between the rocks. Right above engraved inscription: "On the knee horizontal Chen Yu a, this sound only this heart knows." At night, the crane will sleep first and bounce until the moon sets on the empty mountain." Signed: "Wen Peng." Engraved "Longevity" and "bearing" two square seals. Middle engraved regular script inscription: "Chongyan spit clear gas, mysterious glaze habitat miracle." I hope the sound plays a group of sounds, ring out of the mountain drip. When a guest travels alone in the dark, the path is forgotten. Wave the five strings, Lingshan an foot. Flow heart knock Yuan apartment, feel to lifu. Which is the nine, not the evening. The same interest is the same, and one understanding is more than three benefits." Signed: "Wan Li Shin MAO (1591) Autumn August Ren and Lee Shiyong." Ring "Zhen Yang" long square seal. Another "deep Fu Gao Lian family stash". This inkstone

involves many people, including Wen Jia (1501 -- 1583), the second son of Wen Zhengming. Wen Peng is Wen Jia's brother. Li Shiying, life story is unknown. Gao Lian, styled Shenfu, whose birth and death years are unknown, was a famous opera writer in Wanli Period of Ming Dynasty. From the overall viewing description of this inkstone, this name is the good wishes that people place on it, but the patterns in the inkstone are mostly landscape elements, and the chanting of the writers will also integrate the vision in the landscape. The originality of this inkstone and the writer's blessing, so that this inkstone to obtain higher cultural value, can be one of the representatives of the Ming Dynasty with the shape of the landscape inkstone.



Figure 6. Zhang Xuanming Calligraphy and Painting Lanting Inkstone



Figure 7. Zhang Xuanming Calligraphy and Painting Lanting Inkstone Side



Figure 8. Zhile Renshou Inkstone

In the Ming Dynasty, there was also a "Wenpeng Style Shanshui Inkstone Following the Shape" (Figure 9), which is now housed in the Hebei Provincial Museum. The inkstone is slightly round, with a slight depression in the center. The surrounding area is carved with layered mountains, gullies, flowing water, and cloud patterns according to the natural concave and convex shape of the stone, and the gullies are used as inkstones. On the right side of the inkstone back, a natural stone skin is cleverly borrowed from the edge to carve a pine tree with cloud patterns swirling around its branches; On the left side, carved with inkstone texture, there

is a cliff hanging waterfall, and on the shore, there is a crane looking back with its neck drawn. Inscribed in clerical script on the flat central area: 'Jiajing Ji Wei (1559) was made in Shuizhu Ju', stamped with both 'wen' and 'peng' seals. From the overall view of the inkstone, it is found that this inkstone has a similar meaning to the previous one "Zhi Le Ren Shou Inkstone". The crane and pine symbolize longevity, and this theme is often depicted in Chinese landscape paintings. The mountains, waters, trees, stones, and flowing clouds are distributed among them, and natural stone skins are cleverly borrowed, and the texture of inkstones is used to enrich the expression of theme content and hierarchy. This is the same purpose as using the natural properties of inkstones in the "Tianyan" column of the "Duanxi Inkstone Handbook" to make inkstones, that is, to use the opportunity of natural creation. This is another excellent case of Ming Dynasty landscape inkstone style.

From the above three types of inkstones, it can be seen that there was a significant breakthrough in the development of Ming Dynasty landscape inkstones. They were no longer confined to classic historical themes such as Lanting and Penglai, but integrated the artistic conception and beautiful vision expression of literati landscape into them, forming an organic combination with Chinese landscape painting. The carving techniques were more diverse, including exquisite and delicate carving, as well as clever ideas using natural stone shapes, textures, and patterns. At the same time, literati's evaluation of landscape inkstones also formed a trend, integrating calligraphy, seal carving, and poetry into inkstones, which is more closely integrated with landscape painting, presenting a series of peaceful landscape and pastoral paintings. The development trend of Shanshui inkstone style reflects the yearning of Ming Dynasty literati for natural landscapes and the pursuit of a better life, becoming a very important period in promoting the development of Shanshui inkstone style.

5. Qing Dynasty: The Maturity and Prosperity of Duan Yan Shan Shui Inkstone Style

The production of inkstones in the Qing Dynasty can be regarded as a glorious chapter in Chinese history, with diverse inkstone styles, unique styles, and unprecedented wide range of materials; The exquisite carving skills and intricate detail processing are unmatched by previous dynasties. The number of surviving works also far exceeds that of previous dynasties. With the deepening mining of mineral deposits such as Duanyan Laokeng and Kengziyan, as well as the discovery of Mazikeng during the Qianlong period, a large number of high-quality and aesthetically pleasing inkstones were excavated and utilized, such as fish brain jelly, ice pattern jelly, banana leaf white, sky blue, fire clay, blue and white, jade and other stone products, which are incredibly beautiful.

The carving style of Duan inkstone in the Qing Dynasty continuously innovated on the basis of inheriting the skills of previous generations, forming a unique carving technique that was tailored to the stone, patterned according to the shape, and emphasized strengths while avoiding weaknesses. Inkstone makers and literati work closely together, reflecting the aesthetic taste and elegant artistic conception of literati from material selection to design and carving. Many literati and scholars have joined the evaluation and collection of inkstones, and even participated in their design and

production, such as Zhu Yizun, Gao Zhao, Gao Fenghan, Huang Ren, Jin Nong, Liu Yong, Ji Yun, Ruan Yuan, He Shaoji, Zhang Zhidong, Xie Lansheng, etc. At the same time, with the active participation of these literati, famous inkstone carvers such as Gu Erniang and Wang Xiuyun also emerged, becoming famous for a while.

The "Gao Zhaoming's Red Cliff Inkstone" [27] (Figure 10) currently housed in the Tianjin Museum is a representative literati landscape inkstone of the Qing Dynasty. The inkstone makes good use of the texture of the raw stone and the trend of the material into the red cliff picture. Inkstone face for inkstone, surrounded by carved clouds and stones and water patterns. On the upper left of the inkstone, a star-moon pool is opened under the cloud belt. Inkstone forehead engraved seal "high wind through the ages", engraved "autumn", "Tao" two seals. Ink-stone back carving red cliff rafting map, steep cliffs turbulent, magnificent (Figure 11). There are two inscriptions engraved in the blank between the mountain and the day, and there are "Gu Zhai Gao Zhao", "Wu Bingjun Ming" and other sections, with no details. This inkstone very well reflects the characteristics of landscape inkstone carving in the Qing Dynasty, and the literati interest to express is also very clear and clear. The current collection of the Palace Museum's "Xilu Reading Inkstone" [28] also well reflects this style, "the shape maintains the original shape of the stone, fully shows the natural fire of the stone texture, only a little drawing on the back of the inkstone, forming a simple landscape map. The shape is simple and natural, and the precious Duanxi inkstone material is fully displayed, and the artistic effect is excellent." [29] There is also "Ruan Yuanming Yunlin Xiaojing Inkstone" [30] now in Tianjin Museum is also quite creative, inkstone with the shape of the long square system, inkstone face without decoration, The backside of the inkstone makes good use of the texture and color of the stone fat (skin) to carve out the small scenery of the cloud forest, its clouds, birds, rocks, trees, grass pavilions and characters each have their own state, elegant and pure beauty, reflecting the dream and distant landscape artistic conception. Another collection in the Guangdong Provincial Museum "Xie Lansheng's Inscription on Sitting with the Shape of Landscape Ink Stone" [31] is also of this kind, from the main body of the sculpture is facing the wall of the figure sitting hidden between the landscape, plus inkstone inscription: "heavy rock, foot breeze." Fan does not shake, cool air. The moon shines, the white clouds are in the cage. Sit alone, an old man." From the point of view, more emphasis on the zen environment in the landscape, reflecting the high level of inkstone people.



Figure 9. The back of the Wenpeng style Shanshui inkstone



Figure 10. Gao Zhaoming's red wall picture. Duan inkstone



Figure 11. Gao Zhaoming's red wall picture. Duan inkstone surface

In addition to the distinctive features of the Qing Dynasty's landscape inkstone style mentioned above, carving landscape patterns on the traditional Duan inkstone format has also been passed down. For example, the "Rectangular Landscape Inkstone" collected by the Hengyang Museum features a shallow relief of landscape scenery carved at the beginning of the rectangular Duan inkstone. This layout has a certain breakthrough in form compared to before the Ming Dynasty, placing landscape patterns in the very important front part of the inkstone surface and paying attention to the formation of high and low undulations in the stone texture. There are also several famous inkstone making families, such as the "Lanting Inkstone" and "The Sea and Sky Inkstone" that have been passed down through the ages. They gradually formed in Baishi Village and Binri Village in Zhaoqing, the birthplace of Duan Inkstone, and make inkstones according to their specialties, which have been passed down for a long time.

6. Modern Times: The Era Shift of Duan Yan Shan Shui Yan Style

In modern times, especially since the 1980s, the landscape inkstone style has experienced rapid development. During the Republic of China period, due to years of internal and external wars, the inkstone industry also stagnated from time to time, and could only continue the tradition of the Qing Dynasty without significant changes or breakthroughs, as can be seen from the preserved Duan inkstones from the Republic of China period.

Since the late 1970s, due to the gradual use of industrial machinery for raw material extraction, the continuous development and iteration of inkstone carving tools, the liberalization and internationalization trend of the sales

market, and the transformation and promotion of public aesthetic needs, the landscape inkstone style has gradually become an important stage and has been widely welcomed by the market. Modern and contemporary landscape inkstones have developed a style with characteristics of the times, while continuing the previous standard - the Suixing Landscape Inkstone. This style has already been presented in the inkstone mentioned earlier, and on this basis, contemporary inkstone artists have made new improvements and breakthroughs. The widespread emergence of the landscape inkstone style is mainly due to its suitability for making random shaped inkstones, which can preserve the raw materials as much as possible, allowing for the extensive use of flaws that were originally intended to be removed; Second, the theme of mountains and waters is particularly in line with the vision of countrymen yearning for mountains and forests, and has its psychological needs for natural mountains and waters; Thirdly, inkstones have gradually lost their practical grinding performance in contemporary times. Most inkstones only retain the basic functional style of inkstones, mainly for people to enjoy, without considering whether it is convenient for people to use. In this era, a group of outstanding figures emerged in the production of Duan Yan Shan Shui inkstones, among which Liu Yanliang, Li Kang, and others were representative.

The landscape inkstone made by Mr. Liu Yanliang with skillful use of stone skin is unique and has become an important form of Duan Yan's landscape inkstone style, known as the "Liu Family Landscape Inkstone". He pays attention to enhancing the artistic effect of inkstones. Chinese landscape painting emphasizes the concept of "painting in poetry and painting in poetry." Therefore, landscape painting often has a poetic atmosphere, and some landscape painters even depict poetry as landscape painting, transforming textual landscape into visual landscape. For example, Lu Yanshao's "Du Fu Poetry Book" is a typical example. Mr. Liu Yanliang also pays attention to applying this technique to the layout of inkstones, but it is not an easy task to achieve this because it is a complex craft that depends on the specific situation of the raw materials, which is known as applying art according to the materials. Generally, the following rules should be followed: if the stone is refined, the work will be simple; if the stone is poor, the work will be refined. Inkstone making is mainly based on stone, with patterns as objects. The essence of stone is perfect, and there is no need to decorate it with decorative patterns; On the contrary, if there are defects in the stone, they need to be covered up with pictures and text. Skilled inkstone workers can often use the prototype of stone to guide the situation and cleverly utilize flaws to turn decay into magic.[32] Mr. Liu Yanliang is well aware of this, so his works such as "Jiangshan Duoqiao Inkstone" (Figure 12), "The Green Mountain Inkstone Outside the Mountain" (Figure 13), and "Visiting Friends Under the Moon with Inkstones" [33] are all representative of this aspect. He uses these poetic images based on the size, height, undulations, and position of the stone skin and patterns of the inkstone material, and applies the colorful nails, jadeite, stone skin, etc. that were previously defects in the Duan inkstone to the design of the inkstone. He also compares the stone eye to the moon shadow, stars, etc., and targets the management of the inkstone surface. The best parts of the stone are left as ink halls, and of course, the stone eye is also placed in the inkstone. The hall is used for appreciation and enjoyment, and then carved and trimmed to become a landscape inkstone with

its own "Liu family" characteristics. This form of inkstone making breaks away from the traditional arrangement of landscape patterns on the back or side of the inkstone, and the rare use of three-dimensional carving with high and low undulations in landscape patterns. As mentioned earlier, it cleverly uses stone skin and stone patterns to enhance the poetic effect of the inkstone, optimize its appearance, and provide viewers with a better aesthetic experience.



Figure 12. Liu Yanliang Jiangshan Duoqiao Inkstone

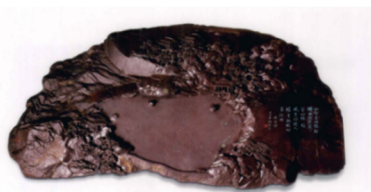


Figure 13. Liu Yanliang Mountain Outside Qingshan Inkstone



Figure 14. Li Keng Xinghu Chunxiao Inkstone

Mr. Li Kang used to work at the Zhaoqing Craft Factory. The "Star Lake Spring Morning Inkstone" [34] (Figure 14) he created in 1978 was a landscape inkstone based on the natural landscape of Qixingyan in Zhaoqing, ingeniously conceived and created. This inkstone had a great social impact at that time and won national honors, attracting widespread attention in the inkstone making industry. The inkstone has a larger shape and was carved using Mazikeng stone from the three famous pits of Duan inkstone. The landscape patterns are all distributed on the surface of the inkstone. The seven stone eyes are regarded as the Big Dipper and are distributed in the inkstone hall and left side, and the most representative attractions of Qixingyan in Zhaoqing, such as Wulong Pavilion, are distributed among them. The hall is located in the main position below the center, because the unique stone fish brain jelly and floating cloud jelly of Duan Yan are like ripples stirred by blue waves, so the hall is seen as a lake surface, making the entire inkstone extremely picturesque. It can be regarded as a classic work of landscape inkstone at that time and has become a representative contemporary landscape inkstone.

Afterwards, the landscape inkstone style became increasingly popular among people, and more and more inkstone makers joined the ranks of carving landscape inkstones, gradually exploring various types of landscapes. However, most of them were extended from the two pioneering landscape inkstone making methods mentioned above, and some were more complex, appearing to have excessive craftsmanship and full of craftsmanship; Some are even more hasty, lacking in charm and rough texture,

resulting in a plethora of industries with varying levels of proficiency, but landscape inkstone is undoubtedly the most important type of contemporary inkstone.

7. Conclusion

Shanshui inkstone originated in the Song Dynasty, with Penglai style and Lanting style as its early forms, although only appearing as accessories of inkstones with landscape patterns. This situation was influenced by the flourishing of landscape painting in the Song Dynasty, which laid the foundation for incorporating landscape patterns into inkstones. The court declined the samples and literati actively participated in the evaluation, especially the intervention of literati and landscape painting masters such as Mi Fu, Su Dongpo, and Ma Yuan, directly affecting the development of the Duan inkstone style in the middle and late Song Dynasty. Due to its short time and lack of attention from literati, inkstone production did not develop in the Yuan Dynasty. Since the Ming Dynasty, literati have been more deeply involved in the evaluation and design of inkstones, and their aesthetic requirements have put forward higher requirements for the standardization of inkstones. Therefore, the emergence of the "Suixing Shanshui Inkstone" with rich mountain and water poetry. From the perspective of the inkstone's appearance, compared with the previous generation's combination with landscape painting, it is more integrated and has more references. In the Qing Dynasty, literati, painters, and inkstone makers collaborated more closely to design and produce landscape inkstones, and developed in more diverse directions, giving rise to renowned inkstone carvers. In modern times, especially after the reform and opening up, the practical function of Duan inkstone gradually declined due to the influence of marketization, and its ornamental value gradually emerged. Liu Yanliang's beautiful landscape inkstone style appeared, known as the "Liu Family Landscape Inkstone" in the inkstone industry, as well as representative inkstone makers such as Li Kang. This change has gradually brought the Duan Yan Shan Shui inkstone into people's households, becoming the most important inkstone style of contemporary times and being loved by people.

Professor Luo Ligang, a scholar of modern inkstone theory, analyzed the morphological differences between ancient and modern landscape inkstones and pointed out that "modern landscape inkstones generally arrange patterns on the surface of the inkstone, regardless of whether their shape is geometric or natural, obviously for the purpose of appreciation." [35] This has obvious functional differences from landscape inkstones made before the Qing Dynasty, which has become a practical problem that contemporary inkstone artists are troubled by, because once the "use" of the inkstone is completely abandoned, it will be completely passivated into a craft, and its cultural value will be lost completely. This may be an irreversible reality. However, as a relatively important category in the history of Chinese inkstones, the development of Shanshui inkstone reflects the dynamic changes in the inheritance of culture and craftsmanship, whether it was carved for practical purposes in the past or preserved for aesthetic purposes nowadays. This dynamic history makes us understand that it will continue to evolve with the development of society and will continue to thrive.

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