

The Yixing Zisha Teapot:

Prosper and Charm with Tea

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Tea, originating from China, is also the national drink in China. According to “Shennong Ben Cao Jing”(The Classic of Herbal Medicine written Shennong), Shennong was poisoned with many toxins after he testing the effects of hundreds of herb. He was saved by drinking tea. In the Han dynasty, about 2000 years ago, farmers in the south China first planted tea trees. Tea became the popular drink with medical and health benefits such as refreshing and recovering from fatigue, improving vision and digestion, resisting aging and elongating life. In the Tang dynasty, with the promotion of scholars such as Yu Lu, Ran Jiao and Tong Lu, more culture elements were added to the tea culture and the Chinese tea culture system started forming.

Tea sets were also developed to have different elements to accommodate the tea making method and culture:

Before the Tang dynasty, there is no tea set for just drinking tea. People used dining set for tea instead.

In the Tang Dynasty, tea industry went into the gorgeous development period. In the tea making process, spices were added and tea leaves were then pressed into tea cakes in wooden molds. The tea for the royal family is called “Dragon and Phoenix tea cake”. The tea cake was broken into pieces and boiled in a pot and then distributed to bowls for tea drink. There are sets of etiquette for picking tea, evaluating tea and making tea. In the “Book of Tea” by Yu Lu, there are tens of different tea sets. The tea bowls were either white porcelain made from the northern state xin kiln or celadon from the southern yue kiln. Scholars like Yu Lu like celadon bowl more than white porcelain bowl.

Professor. Pan, Chunfang

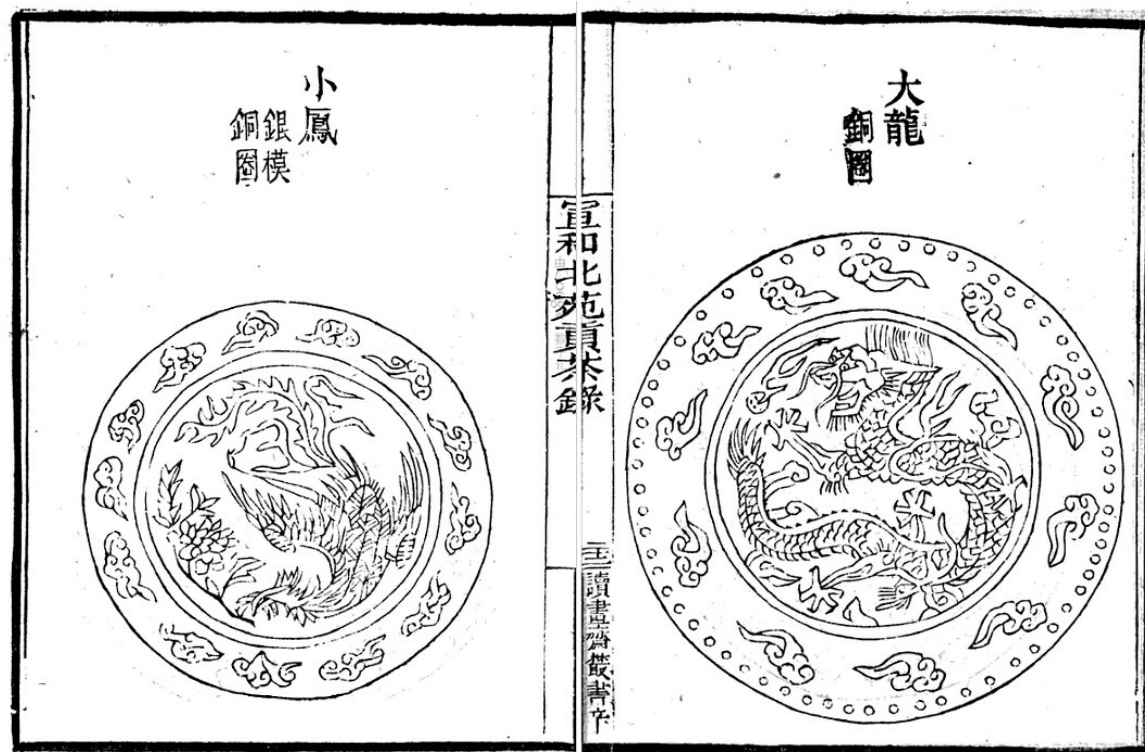
Professor of Nanjing Arts University;
Vice Chairman of Jiangsu Ceramics Society;
Visiting Professor of College of Creative Arts of West Virginia University;
Winner of “China Ceramic Art Lifetime Achievement Award” by China Light Industry Association and China Ceramic Art Association.

Born in a ceramic art family in YiXing of Jiangsu Province, China in 1936. In 1955, he joined in the Yixing Purple Sand Craft Factory and became a student of Zhu, Kexin (A grandmaster of Yixing purple sand). Afterwards, he completed his Bachelor and Master in Central Academy of Craft Art, and started his career from being a leader of Pottery Faculty of Nanjing Arts University.

He was the principal author and editor-in-chief of <Mouldings of Purple Sand and Pottery>, <Collection of Purple Sand Teapot>, <Yixing Purple Sand> etc; major member of the editorial board of <Charm of Dark-Red Pottery Teapots>.



Professor. Pan and his wife Ms. Xu,
Chengquan (Senior arts and crafts artist).



Patterns of "Dragon and Phoenix tea cake" ⁽¹⁾

In the Song Dynasty, tea culture went into a delicate period of union of tea and art. The environment and etiquette became more important and delicate. The techniques of making tea leaves are the same as the Tang dynasty, but there are changes in the way of drinking tea. The tea cake is first broken down into small pieces; hot water was then poured into tea bowls to make tea. Tea competition was popular and the black enamel tea bowl is the best because people can see the white foam formed by string the tea powder in the hot water in the black bowl.

In the Yuan dynasty, it became the turning point for tea culture in china. The first King Bili Hu liked to make tea with tea buds and drink tea along with tea buds. The tea cake was only used for memorial services. It was a time when tea leaves and tea cakes are both in use. The Yuan territory expanded into eastern Asia, middle east and all the way to Europe so did the tea.

In the Ming dynasty, it went back to the natural and simple era for tea culture. Yuanzhang Zhu became the king of the Ming dynasty. He banned the dragon tea cake and prohibited the addition of spices to the tea. He promoted the loose leave tea and made tea in a teapot with boiling water and appreciated the original and natural taste of tea. The tea making and drinking culture totally changed. In the beginning of Ming dynasty, teapots are mostly metal made from copper and tin. There are some porcelain and ceramic teapots as well. After a while, The scholars found the Yixing Zisha teapot is the best for tea with no glaze.

In the Qing dynasty, the tea art pursued perfection with the influence of scholars. It emphasis on enjoyment of all five senses of eye, mouth, nose, ear and hand to the perfection of color, sound, aroma and taste. There

⁽¹⁾: Xiong, Xi. <The Records of Tribute Tea in XuanHe North Palace>, Original Song Dynasty, Volume 1, Chapter 57-64, P. 41 & 41, Print. Dec 20, 2015.



*Pan, Chunfang, YiXing Purple Sand Teapot
“Waves”*



*Pan, Chunfang, YiXing Purple Sand Teapot
“Ancient Plum Blossom Stump”*

is a description on sound in the book of “Famous Teapots from Yangxian” in addition to the description of color. The Yixing Teapot became more versatile in terms of variety, style and color. By that time, it was well known in the world as “Teapots made by Dabin is hot possession in the royal family, Plates made by Mingyuan is sought after by oversea fans”.

Yixing Zisha Pottery is the purple clay pottery made from the siltstone of iron clay with no glaze to show the natural color of the clay. There are various forms as teapots, vases, pots, tripods, office utensils and sculpture decorations. The teapot is the typical and most popular form. The Zisha teapot has numerous forms made by dedicated artists and encompasses both practical and artistical values. It has become the ideal set for team enjoyment. Yixingg Zisha Pottery plays a unique role in the history of China ceramic art with being an excellent practical house-ware in addition to rich texture and color, various forms and styles, various colorful decorations and superb techniques.

Excellent practical house-ware:

In the Ming and Qing dynasty, there are many papers praising the Yixing Zisha for being the excellent practical and functional houseware. Mr Li Yu in the Ming dynasty said “ For drinking tea, the best pot is in Yangxian”, “The best Teapot is still the Zisha teapot. The lid neither takes away the aroma nor makes the tea over made. The tea in the pot is original taste with excellent color, smell and taste”. The Zisha clay is a compound of many minerals, the molecule is arranged like scales. After firing, the clay becomes dual layer porosity structure with excellent breath capability and water absorbance. That is why the Zisha teapot can keep the color, taste and aroma of tea and often makes the tea drinker enjoy the tea with all senses - eye, ear, nose, tongue, body and mind”. In addition, because the Zisha clay is low in aluminum and high in glass, it can handle sudden cold and hot transition and is very durable.

Pan, Chunfang, Yixing
Purple Sand Work
“Plum Blossom Rings
Three-feet Censer”



Rich texture and color:

Zisha clay originated from the hill near the town of Dingshu. There are three kinds of clay known as purple clay, red clay and green clay. In addition, any of those colors can be mixed together to create elegant colors such as purple blue, dark purple, Begonia red, red purple, watery green, yellow, pear skin, dark green and dark red. The beauty in the texture of Zisha is incomparable by any other ceramics in terms of the smoothness of red clay, the simple and elegant purple clay, the pear skin like mixing clay and the brilliant star like decorating clay. The techniques can be applied to make natural stone or wood like texture. In addition, the surface can be polished to make it shine like a mirror. Lastly, the unique quality of Zisha teapot lies in the liveness of the teapot. It changes color and looks more like pearl or jade as being used with tea and polished by the touch of the hand. It is as if the owner has put in life to the teapot and the owner enjoys watching the change in the teapot.

Various forms and styles:

Zisha clay can be made with no constraints to accommodate creative thinking and artistic expression. The form and style is known as “all squares are not the same, all circles have different look”. Based on the geometrical shape, Zisha pottery has classified into four types as circular type, square type, the natural shape type and rib pattern type. Circular type shows symmetrical beauty showing strength out of the flexibility as well as the beauty of pearl and jade. The famous makers for circular type teapot includes: Dabing Shi, Menchen Hui, Dahan Shao and Jinzhou Gu. The Pearl teapot, The ball teapot, The imitation teapot and the cloud teapot are classical circular type teapots. The square type teapot is made of planes and lines, shows the beauty of clean, crisp and graceful, The monk’s hat teapot, Chuan Lu teapot, Gu Edge teapot are classical square type teapots. The natural shape type imitates natu-

ral shape of things and can also have decoration on the surface. It has cute shapes, multiple colors and was made delicately by technicians. The interest element was added to the design to give the teapot both shape and meaning. Gong Chun Shu Ying teapot is the earliest and also a great representative natural shape teapot. Starting from the beginning of the Qing dynasty, the natural shape type became very popular. Mingyuan Chen, Shenshi Xiang, Guiling Feng, Shiming Pei, Kexin Zhu, Rong Jiang are masters for making the natural shape teapots. The classic natural shape teapots are: the pumpkin teapot, the wood bundle teapot, the plum tree trunk teapot, the spring teapot and the water chestnut teapot. The rib pattern style learned from the copperware and inspired from the stems of flowers and melons. The key is to express the changes on the surface and put into a precise pattern and show the beauty of in order. The classic teapots in this category are the diamond teapot by Han Dong, the Eighteen Mum buds teapot, the Eight Mum flower teapot by Moulin Li and the Plum teapot by Yanchun Wang.

Various colorful decorations:

Due to many masters' creative works and cooperation with scholars and artists, the decoration on the Zisha teapot is well developed. Inspired by metalware, red wood painted ware and ceramics techniques, the main techniques for decoration are surface sculpture, appliqué, stamping, drawing, exquisite caving, mosaic, color glaze, furnace Jun and polish. The caving and painting development benefits significantly from Hongsou Chen, a master artist from the Qing dynasty. Hongsou Chen, also known as Zhigong and Mansheng, was from the Qiantang area in the Zhejiang Province. He is good at calligraphy and carving and is one of eight in the well known group called "West Ling Eight". When he was working in Liyang County, he designed many simple form teapots that can be decorated. Master Pengnien Yang made those teapots for him and sent back for him and his colleagues like Pingjia Guo to add decorations such as painting and carving. This became a new style for the Zisha teapot and made a teapot a meaningful art work. Tea time was popular in the Ming and Qing dynasty. The tea pots made by Mansheng and his colleagues were often added the current thinking, interests from scholars and artist as well as literature elements in addition to the

carving technique. All adds more interests to the teapot. After Mansheng, Yinzhao Qu, Quai Deng and Jian Zhu also added more Chinese paintings to teapots. The poem, calligraphy, drawing, stamping and Zisha teapots are combined inside the kiln. The masters from the contemporary era also marked their work on Zisha teapots. To name a few, those included Hanshu Liu, Kerai Li, Zhuoren Wu, Shanyue Guan, Pochu Zhao, Gong Qi, Zhiliu Xie and Shifa Chen.

Superb techniques:

Beside the good quality clay, a stylish design and decoration, any good Zisha teapot still needs to be done with superb techniques. The famous teapots in the history were all made by masters who have that. The size, ratio, thickness and weight all have to be right. The regular shape has to be perfect; the natural shape has to be so real that it can be mistakenly for real. Take the teapot as an example, an successful teapot must be full of charm in the body, the sprout and the handle. The lid has to be proportional and in harmony. The match between the lid and body has to be perfect and it has to feel right in hand when starting and stopping giving tea so that people feel great and enjoy the relaxed tea time.

Yixing Zisha Teapot has been popular since the Ming dynasty and has become collectibles. The value goes up to the top. According to literature, "A small Gongchun teapot can worth a pot of gold after being used for ten years". The works of renowned maker Dabin Shi have been sought after by many officers, the wealthy and scholars. The teapot by Dabin Shi is known as the treasure from famous kiln and sought after. The work from other famous masters such as Mingyuan Chen, Pennien Yang are also treasured no less and become the most valuable for the antique industry. Since the 1980s, the Zisha teapot went into a rapid development stage as China opensthedoortotheoutsideworldanddevelopseconomyprosperity. Moreartistsandtheirworkaregainin-grecognitionthrough awards in the world, the market price for Zisha teapot rose up sharply. At times, it feels like Zisha teapot are priceless and can be more valuable than gold. As it was described in the "Famous Teapots from Yang Xian" - "People can have any treasures in the world but nothing is better than the clay made teapot from Yang Xian".

Written in spring 2015 at Jinlin Cucumber Garden ■

壶由茶兴 茶添壶韵

潘春芳 (南京艺术学院)

关键词：茶 茶具 明代 宜兴紫砂陶 紫砂艺术

茶原产中国，为中国之“国饮”。据文献《神农本草经》记载“神农尝百草，日遇七十二毒，得茶^②而解之”。早在二千多年前的中国汉代，南方的先民就种植茶树，作为日常饮用品流行于民间，当时大家看中的是茶的药用及保健功能，如提神解乏、明目助消化、抗病益寿延年等等。到了唐代在陆羽、皎然、卢同等文人们的推颂下，加入了很多文化层面的内容，使茶日益成为中国文化艺术生活中不可或缺的精致品，形成了内涵丰富的中国茶文化体系。

茶具是随着茶叶的制作工艺，品饮方式的不同，及茶文化的发展在各个朝代有着不同的特点和要求：唐以前作为单纯的日常食物没有特定的器皿，通常是由餐具代行其功能。

唐代的茶艺进入华丽考究的典范期。唐代制茶时在茶叶中加入香料，然后在木模中压制茶饼，进献朝廷的称之为“龙团凤饼”。品饮时需将茶饼弄散，放入锅中煮沸，再用茶勺舀入茶碗分而饮之。选茶、赏茶、煮茶、品茶都有整套的礼仪规范，所以《茶经》中陆羽就列出了数十种与此相关的茶具。当时所用的茶碗分别是产于北方烧造白瓷的邢窑与南方烧造青瓷的越窑，陆羽等茶人认为青瓷茶碗比白瓷茶碗更胜一筹。

宋代的茶艺是茶与相关艺术结合的精致期。饮茶环境、茶礼茶俗更为讲究。宋代制茶方法沿袭唐代，但品饮方式有了变化，先将茶饼弄散的散茶，放在碾槽中碾成粉末，然后放在茶碗内用沸水冲泡，当时流行斗茶之风俗。因此产于福建建阳及江西吉州的黑釉茶碗最受欢迎，因为冲泡的末茶经竹筴搅动后形成的白色泡沫在黑色的茶碗中更为醒目。

元代是中国饮茶风尚的一个转折期，元始祖忽必烈喜欢用散芽茶直接冲泡，并连茶汤与茶叶一起吃进肚里，团茶只是用来祭祀，是团茶与散茶并存的时代。由于元代的版图一度曾由东亚直至中亚欧洲，因此也将中国的茶艺推广至欧洲、中亚地区。

明代的茶艺是由精致华丽回归到自然简朴的创新期。朱元璋当上了明代皇帝，他颁令废“龙团”，明令禁止在制茶时掺入香料，提倡制作散茶，放在茶壶中用水直接冲泡，主张品尝茶叶之原汁原味。制茶饮茶的风尚发生了彻底的变化。明初所用之茶壶主要是铜锡等制作的金属质地的壶、瓷壶及陶壶。在实践过程中讲究品茗的文人，发现了宜兴所产的不施釉的砂壶是天下最好的茶壶。

清代的茶艺体现了力求茶汤完美的文士风尚。讲究“眼、口、鼻、耳、手”五境之美。更有“以尽色、声、香、味之蕴”《阳羨名陶录》多了一个“声”字的形象描述，“声”是“色”的相应补充。这个时候宜兴紫砂壶的品种、造型、色泽已更趋丰富多彩，有着“官中艳说大彬壶，海外竞求鸣远碟”的美谈，宜兴紫砂的名声已遍布海内外了。



宜兴紫砂陶是用含铁粘土质粉砂岩为原料制成的紫红色陶器，表面不施釉，以天然的陶土色为特色。制品包括壶、瓶、盆、鼎、文房雅玩及雕塑陈设品等，壶是其代表品种。紫砂壶造型多样，制作精良，兼备实用性与艺术性于一体，自明朝中叶以来成为中国最理想的饮茶品茗用具。宜兴紫砂陶以其优良的实用功能，丰富的肌理色泽，万千变化的造型，多彩的装饰手法及精深的制作技巧在中国陶瓷艺术史上有着特殊的地位。

优良的实用功能：明清两代有很多赞颂宜兴紫砂壶优良实用功能的论述，明代李渔说：“茗注莫妙于砂，壶之精者又莫过于阳羨”，“茶壶以砂壶为上，盖既不夺香又无熟汤气，故用以泡茶不失原味，色香味皆蕴”。紫砂泥是多种矿物的聚合体，泥分子成鳞片状排列，烧成后陶胎生成双重气孔结构，具有适量的气孔率和吸水率。因此紫砂壶泡茶品茗可保茶色、茶味、茶香不变，使品茶者“眼、耳、鼻、舌、身、意直入清凉世界”，在视觉、味觉、嗅觉各方面得到满足。另外由于紫砂陶胎含铝量高玻璃相少，冷热急变性好，故能经久耐用。

丰富的肌理色泽：紫砂陶土产于宜兴县丁蜀镇附近的山丘之中，主要有紫泥、朱泥及本山绿泥三种。经不同的配比可产生天青、黯肝、海棠红、朱砂紫、水碧、葵黄、梨皮、墨绿、黛黑等雅致色泽。紫砂陶的肌理之美是任何陶瓷材料无法相比的，如朱泥的细腻柔滑，紫泥的浑朴古雅，调砂泥的梨皮肌理，铺砂泥的星星点点灿若星辰，绞泥手法可现石纹及木纹的自然纹理。紫砂制品表面还可以“抛光”，使其光可鉴人。紫砂壶还有一种最为独特的品质：一具茶壶经日常茶汁浸润使用，手摸涤拭，即能发出黯然之光，如珠似玉，使用者的宝爱及精心养护，彷彿给砂壶注入了生命，壶的主人也能深刻感受到一种成就感。

变化万千的造型：紫砂陶土具有无拘无束的表达性，可以容纳各种创造性思维，有着多种艺术表现形式。紫砂陶艺的造型早有“方非一式，园不同相”的评语。按不同的形态特征，紫砂陶的造型可以分为园器、方器、塑器及筋纹器四类。园器骨肉亭匀，柔中寓刚，隽永耐看，显示一种珠园玉润的美感。自古至今制作园器的名家有时大、惠孟臣、邵大亨、顾景舟等人，园珠壶、掇球壶、仿古壶、线云壶等都是典型的园器造型。方器线面挺括平正，轮廓线条分明，给人以干净利落，明快挺秀的美感。僧帽壶、传炉壶、觚棱壶等是著名的方器造型；塑器是肖形状物的自然形及带浮雕装饰的器皿造型，其特点是巧形、巧色、巧工，功能合理，理趣兼顾，取得形神兼备的艺术效果。供春树壺是已知最早的壶形，也是一件杰出的塑器造型。自清初开始，紫砂塑器风行一时，陈鸣远、项圣思、冯桂林、裴石民、朱可心、蒋蓉是历代制作塑器的高手。著名作品有南瓜壶、束柴三友壶、梅桩壶、报春壶、荸荠壶等。筋纹器造型是借鉴铜器造型传统，吸取瓜棱、花朵等形态特征设计的器形，重点是平面形的变化，将生动流畅的筋纹纳入严格精确的结构之中，显示一种精巧的秩序美。如董翰的菱花式壶、时大彬的十八瓣菊蕾壶、李茂林的菊花八瓣壶、王寅春的梅花周盘壶等都是著名的筋纹器造型。

手法多样的装饰：由于历代紫砂艺人的创造性工作及文人书画家的积极参与，紫砂陶的装饰得到高度发展。在广泛吸取金属工艺、红木漆器工艺及陶瓷工艺各种装饰手法的基础上，形成了浮雕、贴花、印纹、泥绘、雕玲珑、镶嵌、彩釉、炉钧、抛光及作为主流的刻画装饰等手法。其中刻画装饰品味的提升和发展，是与清嘉道年间金石书画家陈鸿寿的杰出贡献分不开的。陈鸿寿，字子恭，号曼生，浙江钱塘人，工书法篆刻，是著名的“西泠八家”之一。嘉庆年间他任职溧阳期间，亲自设计了多种造型简洁，利于装饰的壶形交著名陶工杨彭年等人制作，再由他及其幕僚郭频迦等人题铭并镌刻，使紫砂壶成为内涵丰富的综合陶艺作品，开创了紫砂壶艺的新风范。饮茶品茗是明清文人生活中的一大雅事，陈曼生及其幕僚设计的壶形及撰刻的铭文往往借物寄情，在讲究壶形雅而不俗的同时，按文人的崇尚，兴趣和爱好增加文学的要素，并奏以遒劲的金石刀法。因而曼生壶铭有切茶切水及切壶形的特点，充满了高雅的文人趣味。陈曼生之后，又有瞿应绍、邓奎、朱坚等一批书画家参与，进一步将中国画装饰于壶上，冶诗、书、画、印、壶艺于一炉。中国当代书画家刘海粟、李可染、吴作人、关山月、赵朴初、启功、谢稚柳、程十发等都曾在紫砂陶上留下了墨迹。

(2)：“茶”是“茶”的古体写法。

(3)：出自周澍《台阳百咏》

精湛的制作技艺:一件紫砂陶艺除了有好泥,富有个性风格的造型和装饰外,还必须用高超的制作技艺来完成。历代紫砂名品均出自慎密严谨的名家之手,其大小比例、厚薄轻重均恰到好处。规矩者造型端庄,精密度无毫发之差;肖形者,其神韵动态纹理色彩可以乱真。以壶为例,一件成功之作必然是极富神韵,壶体与嘴、把、钮比例恰当,组合协调,口盖准缝严密,使用时端提舒适顺手,注茗流畅,止水利索。人们在使用时会产生一种快感,进而引发美感,这就是宜兴紫砂陶艺所达到的真善美的极高层次。

宜兴紫砂陶自明代开始便受到广泛欢迎,成为人们争相把玩收藏的物品,其地位“直跻商彝周鼎之列而毫无愧色。”据史料记载:“供春小壶一具用之数十年则值金一笏”⁽³⁾。时大彬的作品更是同时代达官贵人文人学士度藏的珍品,在时大彬同时代人的眼里,时大彬的紫砂壶已是“名窑宝刀”,被人视为珍秘。之后,历代名工如陈鸣远、杨彭年等的作品一直是人们寻觅的目标,也是近代古董行业经营的顶级商品。20世纪八十年代后随着中国对外开放,社会经济繁荣,宜兴紫砂行业进入鼎盛时期,名人名作在海内外屡屡获奖,其市场价格也直线上升,大有“黄金有价,紫砂无价”之势,真应了《阳羨名陶录》上“吁嗟乎,人间珠玉安足取,岂如阳羨溪头一丸土”之说。

乙未年阳春写于金陵黄瓜园 ■



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