

The Art Form of Dragon Patterns on Jade Wares from the Tomb of the Marquis of Jin in Shanxi

Xiaoli Zhao

School of Language and Culture, Graduate University of Mongolia, Ulaanbaatar, 11000, Mongolia

Abstract: The dragon patterns carved on the jade wares of the Marquis of Jin Dynasty are all extremely ingenious, with vivid shapes and exquisite patterns. It presents the magnificent jade culture of the Jin Dynasty in the Western Zhou Dynasty to the world, and provides valuable information for future generations to study the dragon patterns on the jade articles of the Zhou Dynasty.

Keywords: Tomb of Marquis of Jin; Jade; Dragon Pattern Art.

1. Introduction

The tombs of the Marquis of Jin in Shanxi are known as one of the "100 great archaeological discoveries in China in the 20th century". Many precious art treasures have been unearthed, among which there are many types of jade, most of which are now stored in the Shanxi Provincial Museum. Most of the jade dragon patterns unearthed from the tomb of the Marquis of Jin were created by combining several animal forms. It was one of the common patterns in the early and middle Western Zhou Dynasty. The different forms of dragons largely depended on people's different understandings of nature at that time, and how they feel about life. In a nutshell, the dragon patterns in the tombs of the Marquis of Jin belonging to the Western Zhou Dynasty mainly include curly dragon pattern, double-headed dragon pattern, and composite dragon pattern.

2. Jade Dragon Pattern

2.1. Curly Dragon Pattern

It is the image of a dragon's body curled up, as shown in Figure 1. There are two forms of coiled dragons in the early stage: one is the dragon, with the dragon head in the center and the body in a circle shape. The two pictures below are a single coiled dragon pattern, also known as the coiled dragon pattern; the other image of the dragon is upright, the lower part is curled, like sitting on a pan. The overall pattern is balanced, the plane is used reasonably and effectively, and the movement of the dragon is reflected in a special space, which is ingeniously conceived. [1]

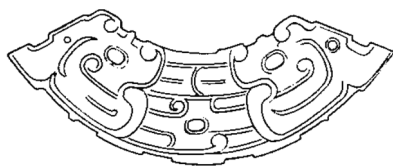


Figure 1. Semicircular jade ornament with curly dragon pattern

Specimen M113: 66-8, Specimen M113: 66-12, decorated with curly dragon patterns on both sides; Specimen I11M31: 46 is from the left leg of the owner of the tomb, brown and translucent. One side is decorated with two facing dragon heads, with scale pattern and scroll dragon pattern between,

arc length 12.3cm; thickness 0.3cm; specimen I11M31:53 is on the outside of the right arm of the owner of the tomb. Decorate the dragon pattern with intersecting tails and looking back.

2.2. Double-headed Dragon Pattern

Double-headed dragon pattern, as the name suggests, it means "two heads in the same body", and there are many forms, such as two heads looking at each other, or two heads facing opposite directions, or two heads keeping one direction, or other. The double-headed dragon is a combination of two dragons or one dragon and one beast. It was first seen in the Yin and Shang Dynasties and prevailed in the late Western Zhou Dynasty. As shown in Figure 2, a jade brand patterns are composed of two groups of symmetrical double-headed dragon patterns. Each group is a dragon with two heads looking at each other, sharing a dragon body. The expression is realistic and affectionate. [2]

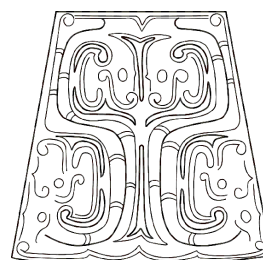


Figure 2. Jade pendant with double-headed dragon pattern

Specimen M102:29-1. Unearthed on the left side of the owner of the tomb. It is light yellow, trapezoidal, with two double-headed dragon patterns engraved on one side, and the body is twisted in an "S" shape. The outer contour of the dragon body is partially hollowed out. The overall composition is symmetrical and smooth, and the lines are smooth.

2.3. Composite Dragon Pattern

Composite dragon pattern is a combination of dragon pattern and other patterns. Dragon pattern and other patterns have their own characteristics, which are different from the combination of half-human, half-beast, and half-dragon, as shown in Figure 3. It includes the combination of dragon and snake patterns, the combination of dragon and phoenix patterns, the combination of dragon and figure patterns, the

combination of dragon and tiger patterns, or other. The human-shaped jade tablets in the jade wares of the Marquis of Jin Dynasty are mainly a combination of dragon patterns and human figure patterns.



Figure 3. Jade figure with Composite dragon pattern

Specimens M8: 202 and M63: 187. It is a flaky side jade figure, the middle part looks like a sitting figure sitting sideways, and the two ends are connected with sapphire ornaments with dragon heads. The characteristics of this type of jade figure are that the whole body is in the shape of a side body, the chest and abdomen are shaped like a side scroll dragon, and the lower limbs are bent. Some of them are decorated with an inverted scroll dragon below the buttocks in the shape of a long tail.

In addition, the dragon pattern in the tomb of the Marquis of Jin generally exists in the state of looking back. The bronze and jade wares unearthed from tomb I11M31 account for a large proportion. Among the 73 jade wares with animal patterns, 41 have head-turning patterns, accounting for 56%. This kind of head-turning pattern was very small in the Shang Dynasty, and appeared in large numbers in the Western Zhou Dynasty, and evolved into intertwined and twisted coiled dragon patterns in the Eastern Zhou Dynasty.[3]

3. Evolution of Dragon Patterns on Jade Ware

Dragon is one of the animals in ancient Chinese myths and legends. The ancestors in the primitive period created a variety of classic shapes of jade dragons according to their own imaginations. It was not until the Shang and Zhou dynasties that the image of the dragon was basically determined. During the Shang and Zhou dynasties, due to the influence of beliefs and backgrounds of the ancients at that time, the shape of dragon-patterned jade was not completely realistic.

3.1. Early Period

Judging from the characteristics of dragon patterns on jade unearthed from noble cemeteries in the early Western Zhou Dynasty, they completely continue all the characteristics of dragon patterns from the Shang Dynasty. Usually, in such cases, most of the relics of the previous dynasty were buried in the earth in this dynasty. The jade dragons of the Shang Dynasty usually have a tiger head as the dragon head, but there are dragon horns on the head, which is a representative work of the combination of dragon and tiger patterns. Jade wares in the shape of dragons appeared and became popular in large numbers in the late Shang Dynasty. The dragon patterns of the Shang Dynasty have been summarized and

analyzed by many experts and scholars. The main features are: mushroom-shaped horns, wide and short inscribed lines on the dragon's feet, many straight or square broken lines, the word "臣" eyes or square eyes, and protrusions on the spine. The edge of the door is different in depth, shallow, wide and narrow, showing a silhouette-like patterned effect as a whole.

The jade dragon in the early Western Zhou Dynasty inherited the style of the late Shang Dynasty, but the features such as the stretched corners of the eyes and the round and round dragon body decoration are far away from the straight and square folded Shang Dynasty style, and there are also ring-shaped jade dragons with the head and tail connected.

3.2. Mid Term

After the mid-Western Zhou Dynasty, the most popular style of jade dragons was the "tongue-throwing jade dragon" with a curled upper jaw and a long tongue protruding downwards. Except for ring-shaped and huang-shaped single dragons, most of these jade dragons appeared in combined forms. There are mainly two kinds of thinner plate-shaped dragons and slightly thicker plate-shaped dragons, and the shape of round-carved dragons is extremely rare.

During the Jin Dynasty in the Western Zhou Dynasty, the style of dragon pattern continued and developed on the basis of the Shang Dynasty, represented by the jade unearthed from the cemetery of the Marquis of Jin. Among the unearthed objects is a jade dragon-shaped pendant, which is small in size but rich in expression: the dragon body is long, curled in a slightly square swirl shape, the dragon's mouth is open, the upper jaw is rolled up to the forehead, and the lower jaw is curled inside the dragon body, forming a "回". "臣" shaped eyes have strips. The dragon's body is decorated with smooth double hook arc lines, and the tail is rolled inside and out without blades. The turning point of the dragon pattern decorative lines is relatively gentle, and most of the double incised lines have the characteristics of a single slope, which is very characteristic of the times.

At this time, the composition and line processing of Yulong appeared to be more stretched than that of the previous period. The engraved lines on the body of the dragon were basically in the style of soft and long curved arcs. Yin lines and Yang lines are used in conjunction with each other, especially the artistic expression of straight thin lines and oblique blades. When the double lines are outlined, sometimes one line is sharp and thin, and the other line is broad like an oblique blade, giving people a fresh and comfortable feeling, forming the unique beauty of rigidity and softness, standardized shape. The mushroom-shaped horns disappeared, and the string patterns on the dragon-shaped jade unearthed in the early Western Zhou Dynasty have been completely replaced. Another most notable feature is that the dragon's kiss begins to roll up, and the dragon's body is decorated with scales or rhombus patterns, most of which are in a spiral shape, with its mouth open and its teeth bared, which is extremely ferocious. The shapes and decorations of dragons and phoenixes are also very popular among Western Zhou jade wares, forming a scene of dragons flying and phoenixes singing and competing for beauty.

3.3. Late Period

The open worked dragon-shaped jade ornaments in the late Western Zhou Dynasty have completely lost the characteristics of the dragon pattern of the Shang Dynasty, showing an open mouth, a rolled upper jaw, pointed eyebrows,

oval eyes, and dragon horns raised back. This is the main feature of the Kui dragon pattern that was popular in the Spring and Autumn Period. The body of the dragon in the Warring States jade is mostly in the shape of "S", but in fact the body of the tiger is also in the shape of "S", so it is sometimes difficult to distinguish the dragon pattern from the tiger pattern. A sense of innovation.

4. Conclusion

As an artistic creation in the ideological field of the working people in our country, the dragon pattern embodies the unique aesthetic consciousness and value concept of the Chinese nation, and has always been a symbol of the spiritual culture of the Chinese nation. The concepts expressed through its unique shape intelligently imply the deepest philosophy

and national beliefs of traditional Chinese cultural thought, presenting a phenomenon of dragon culture in various shapes and colors.

References

- [1] Li Xiating and Zhang Kui (1994). Tianma-Qucun Site The Fourth Excavation of Jinhou Cemetery in the Northern Zhao Dynasty[J]. Cultural Relics, no.8, p.4-21.
- [2] Xu Tianjin and Meng Yuehu(1995), Li Xiating, et al. The Fifth Excavation of the Jinhou Cemetery in the North of the Tianma-Qucun Site[J]. Cultural Relics, no.7, p.4-38.
- [3] Shang Tongliu and Sun Qingwei(2001), Li Boqian, et al. The Sixth Excavation of Jinhou Cemetery in the North of Tianma-Qucun Site[J]. Cultural Relics, no.8, p.4-21.