

The Spiritual Connotation of Dragon Pattern Art in Jade Wares from Shanxi Jinhou Tomb

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Abstract: The cultural relics unearthed from the tombs of the Marquis of Jin in Shanxi are an original treasure house with profound connotations and rich variety, allowing us to experience the wonderland and experience the distant history. The unique dragon patterns contain extremely complex, mysterious, rich and profound social connotations, in this unique pattern, it reveals the original religious consciousness, totem worship, as well as evil spirits and blessings, which imply auspicious symbols, At the same time, we can get a glimpse of the decorative imagery of design that originates from reality and is higher than reality.

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

1. Introduction

The dragon is the most miraculous spirit beast in ancient Chinese beliefs, and it has a profound and charming image in traditional Chinese culture. As a typical image expressing the traditional cultural characteristics of the Chinese nation, the dragon pattern shines with splendor in the history of the art development of the Chinese nation with its strong atmosphere, ingenious artistic conception and unique artistic style.

The art of dragon patterns in the Jinhou Tombs allows us to see through the dust of time the social customs, hierarchy, and aesthetic customs of the 260 years of the patriarchal dynasty 3,000 years ago, making people feel like they are in the past history and feel its charm.

2. The Collection and Classification of the Real Objects with Dragon Patterns in the Tomb of Marquis of Jin Dynasty

2.1. Jade Necklace with Dragon Pattern

Specimen M102:36, the largest plaque is 5.2cm long and 2.9cm wide. Unearthed from Tomb No. 102 in Jinhou Cemetery in 1994. It is composed of 6 pieces of jade plaques, jade tubes, jade beads, turquoise tubes and agate beads. The jade plaques are light yellow in color with negative lines on one side. Three pieces are "S"-shaped jade pendants with double-headed dragon patterns, and three pieces are "S"-shaped jade pendants with combined dragon and phoenix patterns. Among them, the dragon pattern of the double-headed dragon pattern jade pendant is oval, with a curled nose and drooping dragon whiskers. The dragon and phoenix pattern jade pendant has a dragon head at one end, which has the same shape as the former, and a phoenix head at the other end, with round eyes and a curved beak. Both patterns are in the shape of an "S" and outlined with double Yin lines.[1]

2.2. Jade Pendant with Dragon Pattern

Specimen M102:29-1. The height is 8.3cm, the upper width is 5.2cm, the lower width is 7.6cm, and the thickness is 0.6-0.75cm. In 1994, it was unearthed from Tomb No. 102 in Jinhou Cemetery, and it was unearthed on the left side of the tomb owner. 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. There are 7 side anticline perforations on the upper end of the jade pendant, and 9 side anticline perforations on the lower end, which are used to wear beads and pipe strings of other textures to form a group of jade pendants.

Specimens M8: 202 and M63: 187. It is a flaky side jade figure, the middle part is a side portrait sitting upright, and the two ends are connected with blue jade ornaments with dragon heads. The shape of this kind of jade figure is characterized by a sideways human figure as a whole, a side curled dragon shape on the chest and abdomen, and curved lower limbs. Some of them are decorated with an inverted curled dragon pattern below the buttocks, in the shape of a long tail. Specimen I11M63:187, flake-shaped openwork, white and bluish. It is in a squatting posture, with tail, chest, back, and double-hooked dragon patterns on the tail and Yin line. Length 8.7cm, width 3, thickness 0.4cm. At the same time, the heads of these two jade figures are also decorated with dragon patterns in an upside-down posture, as if their hair is scattered backwards.

Specimen M8: 184; M8: 203, M63: 99-15 and M63: 90-15 are frontal flaky jade figures. Among them, M8:184 has three jade dragons on its head as hair accessories or crown decorations. It has thick eyebrows and wide eyes in a humanoid pattern. It is dressed in a high-necked shirt and a waist. The two arms are round and dragon-shaped, and the two feet are turned outward.

2.3. Jade Ring with Dragon Pattern

Specimen M63:61. Diameter 156, aperture 6.8cm. In 1993, it was unearthed from Tomb No. 63 in Jinhou Cemetery. The toothless jade wall is mainly decorated with dragon patterns or variant dragon patterns.[2]

2.4. Semicircular Jade Ornament with Dragon Pattern

Semicircular jade ornament is a ceremonial hanging ornament. Specimen M113: 66-8, decorated with curly dragon patterns on both sides, 7.6cm long. Specimen M113: 66-12, decorated with entangling dragon patterns on both sides, 10cm long; Specimen I11M31: 46 is from the left leg

of the owner of the tomb, brown and translucent. Two facing dragon heads, the gap is decorated with scale patterns and scroll patterns; specimen I11M31:53 is on the outside of the right arm of the owner of the tomb. The decoration is asymmetrical, brown, slightly transparent, fish-shaped, with holes at both ends, and the decoration is two dragons looking back with their tails intersecting.[3]

3. The Spiritual Connotation of Jade Dragon Pattern

3.1. Totem Worship

Totem culture is a very peculiar cultural phenomenon that originated in primitive times. Its long history is a distinctive feature of Chinese totem culture. The dragon is the common totem god of the Chinese nation. There are relics of totem culture from the Stone Age to modern times. Worship of dragons has almost no regional or ethnic distinctions. The dragon is the most miraculous spirit beast in ancient Chinese beliefs, and it has a profound and charming image in traditional Chinese culture. During the Shang and Zhou dynasties, people hoped for good weather and good harvests in agriculture, and the dragon was regarded as a god who represented "God's will" and could make wind and rain. The dragon was a god for the ancients to pray for rain. The image of the dragon is also more mysterious. In the Shang and Zhou dynasties, dragon decorations were mostly seen on bronzes and jade carvings.

Dragon has supernatural attributes, so it has the meaning of witchcraft worship since its birth. "Shan Hai Jing Overseas Western Classics" mentioned "dragon" and said that "there are gods and witches who ride on it to travel the nine wilds." It can be seen that dragons go up and down between heaven and earth to communicate with gods and men, and wizards use witchcraft etiquette to act on behalf of heaven. Life. The concept of worshipping the dragon has been institutionalized in the political life of the Zhou Dynasty. "Zhou Li. Kao Gong Ji. Jade Man" has records that "the emperor uses gold, Shangong uses dragons, Hou uses Huang, and Bo uses generals". Decorations are mostly seen on bronzes and jade carvings. The dragon patterns of the Zhou Dynasty basically followed the Shang Dynasty, but emphasized patterning and decorative effects more, combining the characteristics of several hornless animal images in nature to form the head, body and feet. However, the double horns in the shape of "且" are meaningfully added to the head of the dragon pattern, endowing the dragon with the concept of totem worship with incomparable divine power.[4]

3.2. Auspicious Meaning

The "ritual jade" culture in various places in the late Neolithic Age was inherited and developed in the Shang and Zhou dynasties, creating extremely plump "god-like dragon" patterns, "auspicious phoenix" patterns, etc., as well as the use of Dragon and phoenix patterns, figure and dragon patterns, and "auspicious pattern" decorative jade carvings designed in combination with figure patterns, dragon patterns and phoenix patterns.[5]

At the same time, there have been innovations in beautifying and decorating jade carvings. Various "single wear", "group wear" and "string wear" jade ornaments emerge in endlessly and are too beautiful to be absorbed. For example, the dense sculpture of "human dragon" and "dragon and phoenix" presents a new trend of its comprehensive, freehand,

decorative and practical development.

During the Shang and Zhou dynasties, due to the development of productivity, jade production technology was more advanced than before, and the images of dragons increased significantly. Among the utensils unearthed from the cemetery of the Marquis of Jin, in addition to the above patterns, there are also variant dragon patterns, winding dragon patterns and intertwined dragon torsos. There are various dragon patterns such as patterns. The cross-dragon pattern in the Western Zhou Dynasty is the intertwined upper and lower dragons. It was first seen in the early Western Zhou Dynasty and prevailed in the Spring and Autumn Period and Warring States Period. The intertwined dragon pattern on the torso includes two variants, the hornless dragon pattern and the poisonous snake pattern, which are mostly used in bronze decoration. In the process of evolution, the twisted dragon pattern on the torso became the main pattern on the flags of the princes.

After thousands of years, with the change of people's beliefs, the image of the dragon has been constantly refreshed. In ancient Chinese culture, the dragon has long been a symbol of imperial power. In traditional thinking, dragon patterns are the expression of imperial power. Jade dragons are carefully designed and carved on jade articles by craftsmen. The image of the dragon pattern may be vigorous and graceful, or ferocious, or mighty. Today, people still endow dragon patterns with new elements with stronger emotions, and use them as a kind of spiritual inspiration, a kind of emotional sustenance, and a kind of auspicious hope. The ancient dragon culture and art are constantly developing, increasingly perfect.

3.3. Qi Seeking Happiness

The body of the dragon pattern in the Western Zhou Dynasty is longer than that of the Shang Dynasty, and the lines are smooth; the second is symmetrical, dense, and fills in the gaps; and the turning point of the decorative lines is relatively gentle, and most of the double-inscribed lines have the characteristics of a single slope, very characteristic of the times.

The theme of Jin Guoyu in the Western Zhou Dynasty expanded in various forms, creating "double dragon head style", "dragon and phoenix combined style", etc., especially the "dragon pattern", and "dragon-shaped jade" created a new style, replacing the old one "C" shape with a horizontal "S" shape. This kind of innovation in decorative formal beauty actually deeply reveals the turbulent reality of this era with its distorted "surprised looking back" restless expression. It is not just a purely decorative formal beauty. The popularity of auspicious jade ornaments fully reflects people's strong desire for peaceful reunification.

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 concept expressed through its unique shape intelligently implies the deepest philosophy and national beliefs of traditional Chinese cultural thought, and reflects the phenomenon of dragon culture in various shapes and colors. With the continuous progress of society and the continuous renewal of design thinking, it will continue to serve the field of decoration and has strong vitality.

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