

Artistic Mutual Learning under the Vision of "Belt and Road"

-- Study of Dragon Totem Art in the East and West

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Abstract: With the in-depth promotion of the construction of economic and cultural belts along the "Belt and Road", cultural exchanges among countries are becoming more and more frequent, which plays a significant role in promoting the international dissemination and development of Chinese art and culture, and Chinese traditional culture is attracting the attention of people all over the world. This paper explores the cultural characteristics of dragon totem in Chinese and foreign art from the perspective of world commonality. The Chinese nation has a long history and a rich national traditional culture. In Chinese culture, the dragon is a unique art product of China, which is closely related to the culture and history of the nation and has formed the most widely spread and influential "dragon culture". The dragon is the soul of the Chinese nation and the symbol of the great tradition of the Chinese nation. The dragon is a symbol of the cohesion of the Chinese nation, which is endowed with a noble image and eternal vitality, and is transformed into a god in people's hearts who can call the winds and the rains, signify the auspiciousness and misfortune, and be good at transforming the sky. The image of the dragon is also penetrated into all levels of social life, the beauty of the dragon on the mighty and noble, hosting people's ideals and spirit, and become a rich cultural symbols and hard to part with the blood ties of feelings, forming a very rich and valuable national cultural heritage. The dragon is not only the Chinese nation, but also the totem and culture shared by the whole world. In different cultural backgrounds, dragon totems show unique artistic styles and expressions. They have survived the vicissitudes of time and stand in the forest of world art, uniting the ingenuity of the ancestors, accumulating the essence of the history and culture of different countries, and precipitating the characteristics of various nationalities and different regions, becoming the cultural heritage and cultural spirit of endless life.

Keywords: Belt and Road, Dragon Totem, Culture, Art.

1. Introduction

China's 5,000 years of history and culture have formed the profound Chinese traditional culture and art. Since the construction of "One Belt, One Road", we have exported Chinese traditional culture and art from near and far to the neighboring countries with less cultural differences and more common cultural traditions, and have gained recognition and emulation in the exchanges and dissemination of art and culture in these countries, thus forming international dissemination power and influence. In the course of exchanges and dissemination with these countries, the traditional Chinese culture and arts have gained recognition and emulation, thus forming international dissemination power and influence. As a unique cultural symbol, art is able to promote emotional exchanges among different people with different cultural backgrounds, thus forming a globalized "aesthetic community" and contributing to the realization of the community of human destiny. In order to better promote the cross-cultural communication of Chinese art and to convey its message to the world in a reasonable way, it has become an issue that needs to be discussed by countries all over the world nowadays.

2. Oriental Dragon Totem Art

2.1. Totemic culture

The word "totem" is a translation of the North American Indian word "totem", which means "my relative, my mark",

implying kin, ancestor, protector, and a symbol that distinguishes a social group or an individual. It is a symbol that distinguishes a social group or an individual. Totem worship originated in the matrilineal clan society where the social productivity was not developed and human's knowledge of nature was very limited. At that time, people believed that the group originated from totems, that is, there existed some kind of special kinship between the members of the group in which they lived and a certain species, and believed that the hidden ability of these totems could protect and bless themselves and the group, and named their clans after the totem as a symbolic symbol distinguishing them from other groups. Symbolic symbols. In order to become the totem of a group, first of all, it must be the common ancestor recognized within the group, and at the same time, it must be related to the group, and be able to act as the role of the clan's protector, which can be manifested in the naming of the clan by the totem, and these also side by side reflect the basic core of the concept of totem worship.

2.2. Origin of Dragon Totem

The primitive primitive people regarded totems as their relatives, ancestors and protectors, so they had special feelings and beliefs about totems, which also defined the connotations and characteristics of the sacrificial rituals of totem worship in their beliefs and customs. The dragon mentioned in the selected study is the totem worship of the Chinese community; while the dragon totem worship in the Cannonball Dragon Cultural Genealogy refers to the fact that

in the specific atmosphere of the Cannonball Dragon Festival ceremony, the people broke the original order of reverence for totems and subverted the conventionally established "the real dragon is in the sky". In the specific atmosphere of "Cannonball Dragon Festival" ceremony, people break the original order of reverence to totem objects, subvert the conventional concept of "the real dragon is in heaven", and "honor" the "dragon" in their mind in a way of "revelry". Therefore, the cultural implication and aesthetic characteristics of the dragon totem worship in the "Cannonball Dragon Festival" ceremony is actually a kind of "carnivalization of consciousness" and "carnivalization" of the conversion of art forms and aestheticized expression, which is a part of the specific historical and aestheticized expression of the dragon. It is the result of the aesthetic selection of totem objects by multiple ethnic groups under specific historical conditions.

About the origin of the dragon, from ancient times to the present, I do not know how many literati scholars have carried out detailed examination, we synthesize the history, archaeology, cultural relics and other aspects of the basis for Mr. Wen Yiduo put forward the "totem merger" has the greatest impact. The interpretation of the word "totem" is a symbol. Totem is to say that the Chinese primitive ancestors think that some kind of creatures in the natural world and their own blood relations. It is a clan tribe or several clans and tribes of common belief in the flag and symbols. In ancient clan society, the clansmen regarded the sun, moon, stars, wind, clouds, thunder and lightning in nature and the living and non-living things on the ground as having gods and spirits. Each clan or tribe took one of these deities as the patron saint of their own tribe or clan, as a clan standard and symbol, and also as a spiritual support, so they worshipped it and worshipped it, which is totem worship. In addition to depicting images of nature, most of the totems depicted snakes, tigers, wolves, eagles and other ferocious animals and birds. Because of the merger of clans or tribes at that time, when a powerful tribe or clan annexed another tribe or clan, it absorbed the most powerful part of the totem of the other tribe or clan into its own totem, so that the image formed was no longer a real animal, but became a virtual comprehensive creature. The dragon was then considered a totem symbol, a virtual creature imagined by the people, because it was a comprehensive creature that was formed by combining many different animals in the living world. Even in the literature, the dragon totem has been considered to be somewhat like a horse, somewhat like a dog, sometimes like a fish and like a bird, like a deer, like a snake, and so on.

2.3. Evolution of the Dragon Totem

The evolution of the dragon totem accompanies the history of Chinese civilization, and the dragon image is always influenced by the historical background and characteristics of the era in which it is located. From the Shang Dynasty and the Zhou Dynasty to the Spring and Autumn Period and the Warring States Period, the image of the dragon breaks through the traditional constraints, and achieves its changing shape; from the Qin and Han Dynasty to the Sui and Tang Dynasty, the elements constituting the image of the dragon gradually begin to complete; from the Song Dynasty to the Ming and Qing Dynasty, the dragon pattern, as a kind of decorative element, has gained a great popularity among the imperial family. The change and development of dragon image is also the sublimation of national tradition and national connotation.

The development of dragon decoration is divided into the following three stages:

The first stage is before the Spring and Autumn period, known as the ancient dragon period. The dragons in this period generally showed the basic crawling habits of animals, with a single body form composition, synthesizing the body of a snake and the head features of a wild beast, which formed the characteristics of primitive reptiles. But their forms are very rich and grotesque. There are many variations in their forms, for example, some forms with sharp horns, some with toothed horns, and some without horns; long snouts, curled snouts, and snoutless snouts; there are also many fins, among which there are one fin and no fins; some forms are represented by a single foot, and there are also front and back with and without a foot, and it can be seen from the images that they have retained the simple and ferocious basic characteristics of primitive animals.

The second stage is from the Warring States period to the Tang Dynasty, known as the Middle Ages dragon period, this period of the dragon in the form of a great change in the dragon body of the primitive reptile features gradually disappeared, the form of the dragon has been flying shape. The body shape of the dragon was mostly S-shaped, which appeared strong and steady. The dragon's body structure for the animal body, the head began to appear hair, section hair, dragon horn from the cow horn into antlers, began to appear fork, and appeared sheep beard, the dragon's style has become a formidable. From the Han Dynasty unearthed portrait bricks on the form of the dragon can be seen, the dragon head and neck, imposing; Anji Bridge in Zhao County, Hebei Province on the Sui Dynasty dragon pattern, the dragon's head looking back toward the sky, the dragon's eyes look angrily at the hair fluttering, the dragon's body want to stretch out, the momentum of the vigorous; and the form of the dragon on the mural painting of the Tang Dynasty tombs, the dragon's tail and paws have the characteristics of the tiger's body, they hold their heads high and long whistling, showing the ferociousness of the momentum. Although in this stage, the middle age dragon in the form of a greater progress, but the common features of the form of the head and neck, leaping into the air, imposing, it also shows a strong dynasty in the history of the great fusion of the culture of YiXia.

The third stage is after the Song Dynasty, called the modern dragon period. This period of the dragon form has formed a fixed pattern, the characteristics of the dragon for the body sinuous, soaring in the air, the dragon's head on the horn from the short horn into a long horn, and there is a fork, but has lost the Dragon in the Middle Ages of the dragon's ferocious momentum and mysterious apotheosis of the color, into the absence of offensive, showing a majestic and tolerant bosom. The fine features of the dragon are the upper jaw that changes from curly to straight, the mouth of the dragon becomes shallow, the body shape is sinuous, and the whiskers and hair are flowing, showing the beautiful and coordinated body shape of the modern dragon, which is of high artistic and cultural value. This form of the dragon has continued to the Qing Dynasty for more than seven hundred years, which represents the national culture and spirit of the Chinese people, and the end of a historical era.

3. Western Dragon Totem Art

3.1. Western Dragon Image

The Western dragon (English: European dragon) is an evil

legendary creature. The result of many influences, from Greek and Babylonian mythology to Christianity, followed by Norse mythology, Celtic culture and Anglo-Saxon legends, has created a colorful image of the dragon in European culture. Influenced by Greek mythology, the dragon is the caretaker of treasure, therefore. The dragon represents an evil symbol of greed and destruction. Unlike the Chinese dragon, which represents auspiciousness, it is like the difference between a demon and a monster, a ghost, an undead creature, a demon, an evil spirit, an elf, a goblin, and a fairy. The specific images of dragons in present-day Western society are mainly derived from medieval literature and artwork.

3.2. East Asian Dragon Totem

In the ancient legends of East Asia, the dragon is the god of rain and a symbol of good fortune. Many of China's ancient totems feature sculptures of dragons soaring through the clouds to the nine heavens. This is related to some folklore, of which there are two widely spread: one is that the dragon was originally a snake on the ground, after a long, long time to collect the spirit of heaven and earth and the essence of the sun and the moon, metamorphosis into the jiao, jiao and metamorphosis ultimately become a dragon, only to have the ability to control the wind and rain and fly to the sky; the other is that, in ancient times, there was a gate in the sea, called the Dragon Gate. This Dragon Gate was so big that it could not be seen in its entirety. One day, a carp swam under the Dragon Gate and was blocked. The carp then tried to jump over the Dragon Gate to swim to other places. After countless jumps, the carp finally jumped over the Dragon Gate, but at this time the carp has become another image, long body covered with scales, head has two horns like antlers, and grew four legs, there is an eagle's claw, up to the sky, down to dive into the sea, but also has the ability to call the wind and rain. This legend later became the story of "Fish Leaping Dragon Gate".

By the Chinese culture and Tibetan culture is more deeply infiltrated by the country of Bhutan, its national flag on the three-clawed white dragon. In ancient China, the image of the royal dragon was four- or five-pawed, and only three-pawed was available for vassal kings or vassal states. Tibetans, Naxi, Yi, Bai, Lisu and other Chinese and Tibetan ethnic cultures also have a place for the dragon. For example, the Tibetan culture of "Lu" (klu) that refers to the dragon.

3.3. Southeast Asian Dragon Totem

There is no concept of dragon in Indian culture, but there is a similar concept of the Naga, a class of snake gods, able to call the wind and rain, the king of the Naga resides in the sea, and the characteristics of dragons in East Asian cultures are close. Buddhism will be included in the eight guardian gods of the heavenly dragon, so in the Chinese more translated as "Shenlong", "heavenly dragon", in China's image of plastic paintings are also to the Chinese dragon (dressed in imperial garments) more often; there is also a class of pit vipers God Mohuruaga in the Buddhist view of the wisdom, the power of the gods more than that of the Naga is lack of In Buddhist-influenced Southeast Asian countries, there is a group of vipers, the Mahorajas, who are less wise and powerful than the Naga in Buddhism.

In Southeast Asian countries influenced by Buddhism, such as Burma, Sri Lanka, Thai Dai region, the figure of Naga can often be seen on their temples, the image and the Chinese dragon is very close.

3.4. Ancient Egyptian dragon totem

Ancient Egyptian mythology does not contain a typical dragon figure or a story explicitly featuring a dragon. However, Ancient Egyptian mythology already contained all the original material that would later serve as dragon images and stories, including the destruction of mankind, the confrontation between Horus and Set, and the wings of the sun. Ancient Babylonian mythology blended these elemental variations to produce the prototype of the later dragon story. One prototype of a dragon that appeared in Ancient Egyptian mythology was the image of an eagle in the upper part of the body and a lion in the lower part. The eagle shape in the upper part represented the sun god, while the lion body in the lower part was one of the images of the mother goddess Hathor, the goddess of abundance. This image of the dragon represents all that is characteristic of water, including the good side that makes the earth fruitful and its destructive side.

4. Cultural Characteristics of the Dragon Totem

4.1. Meaning of the Eastern Dragon Totem

From the cultural point of view of the dragon totem symbol, the dragon also represents the cultural essence of the Chinese nation. The formation of the Chinese nation itself is a very complex process, there are many myths and legends about the dragon in ancient China, and they are synthesized together to form the dragon. The dragon is a kind of totem symbol that synthesizes the bull's head, sheep's whiskers, deer's antlers, horse's mane, snake's body, mirage's belly, fish's scales, eagle's claw and tiger's palm, which reflects the complexity of the formation of the Chinese nation and the tolerance of the culture. Diversified animal forms and rich cultural connotations are visualized in the "dragon", which profoundly explains the integration of diversity and unity. Diversified animal shape means diversified cultures, and it is precisely due to the diversified cultures mingling and summarizing in the land of China and Xia that the "diversified" characteristics of the dragon totem symbols are created. As for its essential attribute, in the final analysis, it is "one". The dragon totem is a whole symbol, which not only reflects the long history of the Chinese nation's growth, but also reflects the national philosophical thinking and the essence of the national culture that has lasted for more than 5,000 years. Of course, there is no denying that we are in awe of every animal totem image contained in the dragon totem symbol, but they cannot characterize the identity of the Chinese nation in any way, and they cannot link up the identity of the Chinese nation with that of our children and grandchildren. The plurality of dragon totem symbols is nurtured in one body, if it is separated into one body, the essence of dragon culture cannot be conveyed, and naturally it will no longer have the appeal, cohesion, and identity that totem symbols share.

4.2. Meaning of the Western Dragon Totem

Dragons are large, magical legendary creatures that appear in the folklore of many cultures around the world. Beliefs about dragons vary greatly from region to region, but since the mid-medieval period, dragons in Western culture have usually been depicted as winged, horned, fire-breathing creatures. Western dragons are legendary creatures of evil, and the dragon represents an evil symbol of greed and destruction. Dragons in Eastern cultures are usually depicted

as wingless, four-legged, serpentine creatures with above-average intelligence. The common characteristics of dragons are usually a hybrid of feline, reptilian, mammalian, and avian features. Scholars believe that giant crocodiles that are extinct or migrating most closely resemble dragons, especially those encountered in forested or swampy areas, and that they are likely the template for the modern Asian dragon image.

5. Conclusion

The image of the dragon is a highly imaginative pattern created by the Chinese ancestors, which is the crystallization of the wisdom and aesthetics of the ancient ancestors, and also carries the ideals and aspirations of the ancestors. Our ancestors played the bold imagination, synthesized the characteristics of many animals, and at the same time combined with the clouds, thunder and lightning, rainbows and other natural phenomena, and finally created such a non-existent in the natural world of the shape of the gods, has its unique charm. Ancient people believed that the dragon is the dignity of all beasts, is the messenger connecting heaven and earth, is a deity with strong magic power, driven by the concept of good luck, the dragon totem has always been highly respected by the royal family and folk admiration and esteem, in the many traditional auspicious motifs have the supreme status, can be called China's traditional pattern of the "king". The evolution of the dragon totem is closely linked to the development of Chinese culture, and with the changes of the times it has been continuously developed and improved, with a rich variety of shapes, and has been used until now. Under the construction of "One Belt, One Road", the dissemination of dragon totem art presents different cultural meanings and artistic characteristics due to the differences between Chinese and Western audiences in terms of region, race, custom and culture.

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