

Lacquered Wooden Painted Double-headed Tomb Beast The Aesthetics of Chu Antiquities

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Abstract: Tomb stabilizing beasts, commonly used as burial objects in ancient Chu tombs in China, are an important component of Chu burial customs. Tomb keeping beasts are generally divided into three parts: body, base, and antlers. The overall appearance of the Tomb Beast is fierce and solemn, with a terrifying and terrifying face. The antlers of the deer on its head are intertwined, with complex and orderly patterns. The solid wood on its base has sparked the thinking of many scholars for the mysterious and beautiful portrayal of this woodcarving double headed Tomb Beast.

Keywords: Lacquer Wood; Tomb Beas; Cultural Relics Aesthetics.

1. Introductory

With the continuous development of archaeological work in recent years, the successive excavation of Chu tombs and Chu tombs buried with the advent of the archaeological community on the Chu culture, especially the Chu burial culture research more and more attention, in order to better in-depth search for the ancient and mysterious Chu culture as well as to explore the era of the aesthetics of the Chu culture, I have selected from the ZhenTomb Beasts of this unique and distinctive representative of the Chu tombs buried with common artifacts to study, ZhenTomb Beasts was first excavated in Chu tombs, the distinctive signs, tricky shape has made people marvel at. The tomb-quelling beast was first excavated in Chu tombs, and its distinctive symbols and treacherous shapes have made people marvel at it. The study of the beast of the tomb not only facilitates us to study the aesthetic of the cultural relics of the beast of the tomb as a landmark, but also to understand the mysterious and thick Chu culture from the side.



Figure 1. Lacquered wood and painted double-headed tombstone beast

2. Lacquered Wood and Painted Double-headed Tombstone Beast

Lacquered wood and painted double-headed tomb beasts unearthed in Jiangling Tianxingguan Chu Tomb No. 1,

Tianxingguan Chu Tomb No. 1 excavated in the 1980s, the size of this tomb is the largest of the Chu tombs that have been excavated so far in the Jiangling area, with a rich variety of burial artifacts and a large number of burials, the tomb is also a better preserved form, retaining a considerable scale of valuable cultural relics, the tomb unearthed in the buried goods is the existence of extremely valuable bamboo slips, which provides an important basis for the study of the specific time of the Chu tomb and the owner's situation. This provides an important basis for the study of the specific time of the Chu tomb and the situation of the tomb owner. [1] This tomb beast whether in the shape and form or production process has a very typical Chu-style tomb beast related characteristics, and in accordance with the old system on the basis of modeling more bold and treacherous, is the most grotesque and bizarre one of the tomb beasts unearthed in the Tomb of Chu.



Figure 2. Panoramic view of the wood carving of the double-headed tomb-quenching beast of "If National Treasures Could Talk"

This wood carving of a two-headed tomb beast is about 170 centimeters high, unearthed in 1978 in the Tianxingguan No. 1 Chu Tomb in Jiangling District, Hubei Province, and is now housed in the Jingzhou Museum in Hubei Province, where it is a treasure of the museum. [2]

This wood carving double head tomb beast unearthed in the southern western chamber of the tomb, peculiar shape, manufacturing the use of extremely sophisticated mortise and tenon technology, the whole by the base, body, antlers, three parts of the composition. Wooden lacquer painting, two-headed beast, two beasts head each decorated with a paved head ring, the base is solid three-dimensional square, the base of the four sides of the center also each decorated with a paved

head ring. Tomb beast body black, wooden beast painted with bright red lacquer color, red lacquer pattern abstract complex, in addition to the red lacquer, can also be seen in gold lacquer pattern, the beast body neck painted kui dragons (a dragon pattern) to decorate, curved neck interlinked. The base and the animal body, the head of the beast are using traditional cloud pattern hooked together, the base of the Department is also painted with a hideous animal face pattern and geometric rhombus pattern. The antler decoration of the wood carving tomb beast is made of two adult male elk antlers processed into elk antler branches, two pairs of elk antler branches extending outward in a cross symmetrical shape. The faces of the two beast heads were carved as dragon faces, the eyes of the beast were rounded and the long tongue could hang down to the neck of the beast, the horrible and hideous state has been continued to this day. [3]

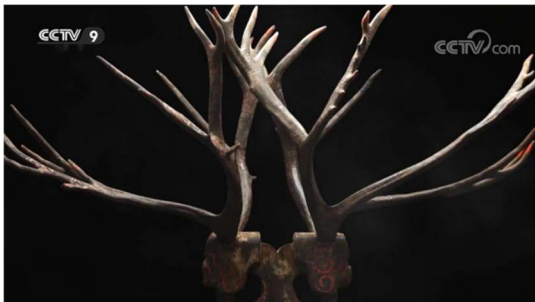


Figure 3. Four outwardly spreading elk antlers



Figure 4. The Tomb Beast's eyes are open in anger.



Figure 5. The face of the tomb-suppressing beast showing a long tongue



Figure 6. Face of the Tomb Beast



Figure 7. Restoration of the vermilion-painted pattern of the tomb-suppressing animal



Figure 8. Scrolls of clouds carved on the antlers



Figure 9. Lacquered wood and painted double-headed tomb-suppressing beast, front view, silhouette

Zhentomb beast head inserted four elk antlers, round eyes outward tongue, the beast body painted pattern colorful eye-catching, and eventually combined into a very scary Zhentomb beast, the beast body is processed by the Chu people exaggerated image, composed of many animal statue factors, solemn and solemn show that the Zhentomb beast itself has to make the owner of the tomb souls ascending to heaven's divine power. [4]



Figure 10. Lacquered wood and painted double-headed tomb-suppressing beast, side view



Figure 11. Lacquered wood and painted double-headed tomb-suppressing animals

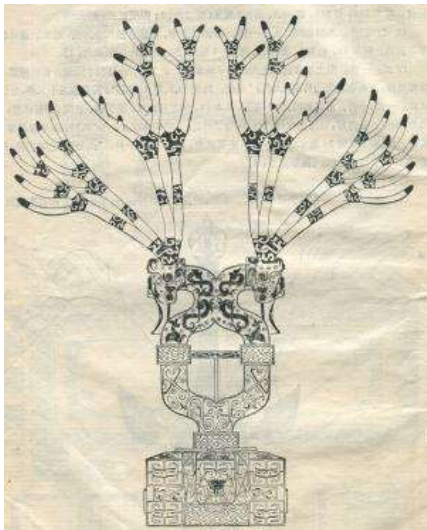


Figure 12. Hand-painted sketch of a lacquered wooden double-headed tomb-quelling beast

3. Exploration of the Origin of the Antlers of the Tomb Beast in Chu Tomb and Related Speculations

3.1. Antlers from the Chu Tomb

Tianxingguan No.1 Chu Tomb's wood carving double-headed beast of the tomb using two pairs of adult male elk antlers, craftsmen will elk antlers processed into the branches

of the horizontal fork, the elk antlers to both sides of the branch, and then inserted into the head of the beast. This tomb beast about the choice of antlers and the number of antlers are the highest regulation in the excavated chu tombs in jiangling area. Chu tomb although common tomb beasts appear, but from the foregoing can be seen, the antlers at the beginning is not constitute the tomb beasts must be things, until the late spring and autumn period of chu tomb unearthed only one after another antlers appeared in the middle of the warring states of chu tomb tomb beasts have basic antlers, antlers are really one of the symbols of the beasts of the tomb. [5]



Figure 13. Painted reclining deer with huge antlers



Figure 14. Reclining Deer Unearthed from Chu Tomb No. 1, Wangshanqiao, Jingzhou, China

Why did the Chu people use deer antlers to decorate tomb animals? Chu people will antlers decorated tomb beast and what is the intention? On the issue of the antlers of the beast of the tomb there have long been scholars to carry out a detailed study, I will only briefly recount this aspect of the content, and then focus on the wood carving of the two-headed beast of the tomb of the double antlers of the relevant additions.

3.2. The Chu and the Deer

Deer, as one of the most mysterious animals in ancient China, is a common element in myths and legends. China has a long history of reindeer husbandry, as early as the 11th century B.C., there are records of reindeer in China. As early as the 11th century B.C., there were records of reindeer in China. During the Shang Dynasty, Emperor Xin built a deer park that was "three miles in size and a thousand feet in height", which is the earliest known written record of reindeer in China. Deer and deer derivatives have also appeared in the life of the ancestors long before there are written records, including antlers. Antlers were often used in medicine in

ancient times, the "Herbal Atlas" has also recorded that "deer, the age of the long time, its horns are good, boiled as gum, into the medicine is very good." Antlers are also often used to produce works of art and decorations, the most extensive use of antlers during the Warring States period is the chu people, chu people will be involved in the production of antlers into the lacquer wood, such as birds, deer, tomb beasts and so on. [6] Tomb Beast is the use of antlers at the time of the most artifacts, the Chu people will be inserted into the head of the animal antlers, there are a single pair of also have a double pair. Deer is a kind of gentle animal, often live in the water and grass, the climate is humid environment. As can be seen from the previous section, is located in many swamps, lush trees, rainfall in Chu and deer living environment coincides with the beneficial living environment suitable for a large number of deer reproduction, the Chu people are also very early on deer hunting and domestication, the development and utilization of the deer Chu people are at the forefront. Antlers also slowly become an important element in the production of Chu crafts. [7]



Figure 15. Lacquered wooden reclining deer in Zenghouyi Tomb

"Qin lost its deer, the world to chase it, in the high talent and speedy feet of the first to get it." Chu people like deer, more like the symbolism represented by the deer. Deer in ancient times is a symbol of power, deer on the meaning of the struggle for power, aristocrats hunting is often hunting deer, can successfully hunt deer is often the ruling class. [8] Chu people are ambitious, have long been the tripod of the heart of the Central Plains, will be used as a deer handicraft is inevitable to show its ambition, to the countries to prove their rights. "Yo Yo deer singing, eat wild artemisia, I have a guest, moral sound hole Zhao." Deer also has a noble and beautiful meaning, love Zhi Zhi Ting Lan of the Chu people are extremely fond of the gentle deer, deer as pets kept in private gardens. [9] Deer also has the meaning of love, the ancient man will be sent to the female deer skin as a bride price in the wedding, which makes the romantic nature of the Chu people on the deer more favorite. Deer antlers forked, smooth access to the road, so there is also the meaning of convergence of wealth and accumulation of wealth. Deer live in a natural and beautiful environment, feng shui is very good, the ancients also deer often appeared in the place known as the blessing of the spirit of the land, the deer is often considered by the ancients is the messenger of the gods, the immortal's mount. Zhou dynasty's founding minister Jiang Ziya mounted four like in fact is now the elk, the Shang dynasty period of the great wizard also used deer bone divination, to contact the gods in heaven, deer is also considered by the ancients as

auspicious beasts, is the gods of things. Deer on behalf of all the meanings of the Chu people are so attached to the deer, the pious love of the deer veneration is the Chu people's own needs, is to support the Chu people's thoughts, is one of the beautiful and mysterious symbols of Chu culture.

3.3. The Role of Antlers

Tomb Beast why add antlers is scholars have been exploring the topic of some years ago. One said that the chu people think that after death, there will be evil spirits harassment tomb master peace, in order to protect the tomb master tomb placed in the tomb beast in order to get rid of the evil, and the tomb beasts play in addition to the evil spirits is the antlers, male antlers are majestic, the horn branch can be used as a weapon, because of the deer itself was chu people think of the gods and spirits of the beasts, the antlers of the deer as a symbol of the deer, but also the deer's function of warding off evil and driving away evil spirits. It is said that the chu people think that after death is not return to the underworld, but through the use of spiritual objects to achieve the purpose of ascension, the middle and late warring states unearthed the characters of the imperial dragon painting is to show the chu people's willingness to ascend to heaven, and the antlers of the deer because of its shape is like a dragon body, chu people or as a spiritual weapon of the ascension of the deer is considered to be the immortal mounts, chu people will be the antlers added to the beast of the tomb may be subject to this aspect of the cultural beliefs. [10]



Figure 16. Double-headed tomb-suppressing beast unearthed from a Chu tomb in the middle of the Warring States period at Ma Yishun Lane, Changsha

The antlers were first added to the tomb-suppressing animals in the late Spring and Autumn period, and since then they have become an indispensable key part of the tomb-suppressing animals. [11] With the continuous development of the beast of the tomb, especially in the middle of the Warring States period, the beast of the tomb has developed into a prosperous period, the antlers can reflect the class of the tomb owner, the more the scale of the tomb, which is buried with the beast of the tomb of the form of the more advanced, the more sophisticated manufacturing process, the choice of antlers selection is more and more important, the choice of antlers at that time the type of antlers have extremely strict requirements, such as the senior regulations of the tombs are generally used elk antlers, the feudal lord, the

upper doctor, the lower doctor of the tomb often use elk antlers, the antlers are used in the tomb of the feudal lord, the upper doctor, the lower doctor of the tomb of the feudal lord. Fengjun, on the big doctor, under the big doctor's tomb often use elk antlers, ordinary regulation tombs are generally plum blossom antlers, at the same time in order to show the identity of the tomb owner antler number also changed, these advanced regulation tombs appeared double head four antlers situation. From the antlers from no to have, from single to double, the choice of antlers from the source, can be a good reflection of the chu people in this period on the funeral customs more and more attention, along with the requirements of the town of the tomb beasts more and more fine, the shape of the scale of the strict requirements. Wooden carving double-headed tomb beast owner is a feudal monarch of the state of chu, his tomb regulation is jangling area chu tomb in the highest level, in order to highlight the identity of the tomb owner, the antlers chosen is the elk antler rather than plum blossom antler, the use of two pairs of antlers for processing.

4. Animal-faced Dragon with Tiger Seated Flying Bird

Warring States Chu customs manifested in respect for the phoenix still red, Chong fire worship, like witch near the ghost. Chu royal family is Zhu Rong (fire god in Chinese mythology) of the descendants of the history of recorded, still red custom since ancient times, so in the Chu lacquer wood, common lacquer theme color for red, black two colors. The warring states "hanfeizi - ten over the chapter" recorded "Zhu painting its inside, ink dyeing its outside". Inside the vessel is painted with vermilion, bright and warm, outside the black lacquer, silent and heavy, the contrast between red and black is interesting, highlighting the richness and elegance of the lacquerware, presenting a strong decorative effect, so that it has the beauty of steady and dignified. [12]

Chu culture unearthed artifacts are a large number of artifacts containing phoenix elements, although the chu people for the phoenix is extremely respected, but chu is not for the dragon does not care, on the contrary chu unearthed artifacts are also dragon more phoenix less, only with the absolute worship of the dragon compared to the countries of the central plains, the chu people on the phoenix feelings more complex and long time ago, and because of the history of chu people had been driven away from the central plains, strong chu and the countries of the central plains in many parts of the world are Running in the opposite direction, such as the Central Plains tombs more north-south, and Chu east-west, so for the dragon this kind of although the ancients are believed to be ancient and powerful beasts, Chu people are not keen on the phoenix, compared to the phoenix is still more revered. But as a representative of the Chu tomb of the town of the tomb beast often painted into the dragon face, the head of the beast is also usually carved into a dragon head, which has the Chu people's own thinking, the Chu people, why not add the phoenix to the tomb beast? We through the current research speculation of the function of the beast of the tomb to speculate on the reason why the chu people use the dragon face instead of the phoenix face.

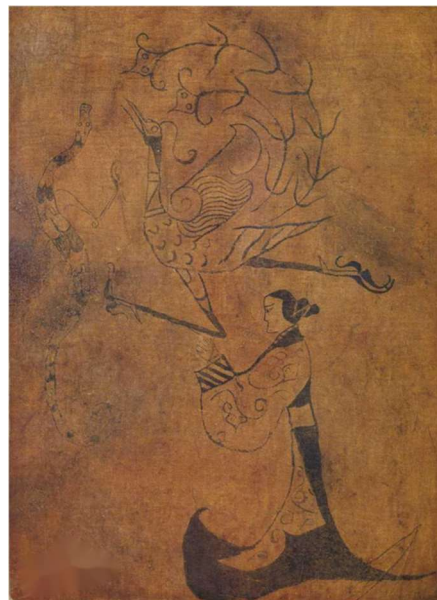


Figure 17. Chu Painting of Figures with Dragons and Phoenixes

4.1. Speculation on the Role of the Dragon Motif on the Tomb-suppressing Beast

First of all, let's make it clear that the dragon element is added to the beast of the tomb, and the dragon must play an important role in it. One of the functions of the beast of the tomb introduced in the previous article is to lead the spirit to ascend to heaven, and the dragon is the tool for ascension, and the people of Chu have more than once expressed their desire to ascend to heaven by the dragon, whether it is the deity ascending by the dragon described in the Nine Songs of Qu Yuan or the painting of silk in Chu depicting the characters to the heavenly realm with the help of a dragon, all of them can express the expectation of the people of Chu that the souls would be free and become gods after death. The good will of the Chu people to become gods after death can be expressed in the hope that their souls will be free. Dragon and phoenix have spirituality, can communicate with heaven, chu people choose dragon but not choose phoenix in my opinion may have more respect for the phoenix reason, they dare not overstep the use of phoenix, chu people can drive the dragon car to and from heaven and earth, and the phoenix is not they can drive at will. And the dragon can go up to the sky into the sea, clouds and fog, change, the phoenix only fly can not dive into the seabed, the dragon more than the phoenix more flexible, tomb beasts and deterrent to the role of grave robbers, the phoenix elegant and noble, the torso of the soft and straight and smooth, compared with the dragon lack of hideous and majestic feeling, may be the chu people think the phoenix can not play a deterrent to threaten the sense of.

In addition to the tomb beast also has the function of exorcism, the dragon as our country revered thousands of years of the gods, the ancients will be very mythological, omnipotent, omnipresent, for the elimination of evil spirits, people often think that the dragon is a god of infinite power, exorcism of demons and demons of the beast, so although the chu people revere the phoenix, but they also have exchanges with the central plains of the countries, on the dragon's powerful statement or agree, rooted in the nation of the thousand years of the dragon's soul! Make the Chu people extremely trust the dragon's power, the use of the dragon as a guardian of the spirit of the beast also has its significance. So

the last wood carving two-headed tomb beast was carved into a hideous horror of the dragon face may be in order to deter intruders, hoping that with the help of powerful beasts guard the tomb peace and quiet, and guide the tomb owner early to the realm of bliss, ascension to immortality.

4.2. Birds of Prey and the Battle of Bachu

During the Spring and Autumn and Warring States Periods, people believed that after death, the two elements of life, the soul and the spirit, existed at the same time, and the idea that "the soul returns to heaven and the spirit returns to earth" was widely popular. People hope that after death the soul can ascend to heaven, and this often need to use the dragon, phoenix, tiger, deer and other sacred beasts of divine power, the Chu people believe that they have the communication between heaven and earth, Xingrui evil powers. [13] In the Chu Kingdom unearthed many funeral utensils, the most representative of the artifacts is the tiger seat bird and tomb beasts, they are the Chu people's concept of life and death, an important reflection of worship beliefs.



Figure 18. Flying Bird on Tiger Seat Unearthed from a Chu Tomb in Jingzhou

The Tiger Seat Flying Bird is a burial object unique to Chu tombs. Jingzhou unearthed more than ten pieces, accounting for two thirds of the total excavated, its basic style for the combination of the sound of the phoenix and crouching tiger. Jingzhou Tianxingguan 2 Chu tomb excavated tiger bird, for example, the tiger for the base, head high and crouching, the back of a tilted head on the wings of the phoenix bird, the phoenix back inserted a pair of elk horns. The whole body painted black lacquer for the ground, with red and yellow colors painted bird feather pattern, deformed phoenix bird pattern, scroll cloud pattern and other patterns. []

This tiger-seated bird of prey was also excavated in the southern west chamber of the tomb, as was the beast of the tomb. It is carved in round wood. A ferocious tiger looks up at the sky with rounded eyes, its limbs are coiled in a crouching position, the tiger's tail is rolled inward, and on its back stands a phoenix bird with its wings spreading towards the sky, with a beautiful posture, and two pairs of symmetrical antlers are inserted on the wings of the phoenix bird. The tiger and the phoenix are painted in black, with red, gold and

yellow lines, and the total height of the piece is 108 centimeters. This is a typical Chu-style artwork, and its form and content harbor the ideological concepts of the Chu people at that time.

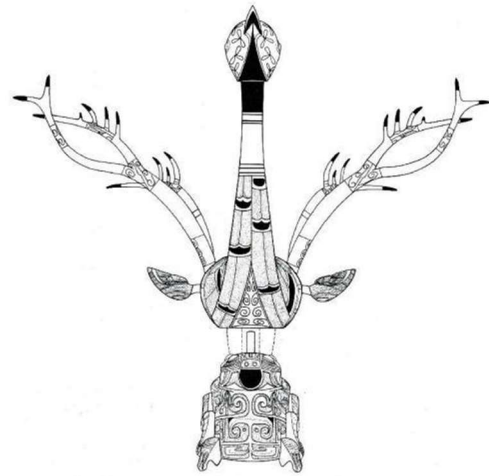


Figure 19. Sketch of the restoration of the bird of prey in the Tiger Seat

Chu people to phoenix bird as a totem worship, and Ba people to white tiger as a totem worship, "phoenix bird" and "white tiger" in the two peoples have irreplaceable significance. In the artifacts unearthed in Chu commonly used phoenix, tiger refers to Ba Chu. Chu and the two countries are neighboring countries, with a long history of 600 years of interaction, there is peace between the two countries, there are also many wars. [15] From the point of view of this tiger bird of prey, the phoenix bird, which is on the top of the bird, is in the center. The phoenix, the auspicious animal of Chu, stands on top of the tiger, spreading its wings made of the antlers of the moose, the precious animal of Chu. The phoenix is tall and sturdy, with an impressive appearance, and opens its wings to sing, while the tiger is short and crouches on the ground, submissive to the phoenix bird's feet. The contrast between the handsome phoenix and the short and lewd tiger is visually striking. This modeling seems to imply that "Ba" is subjugated to the might of "Chu", reflecting the strong desire of the Chu people to defeat the Ba people.

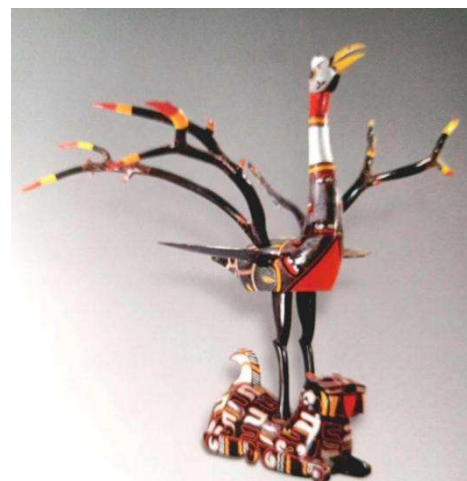


Figure 20. Tiger standing on a phoenix in a Chu tomb at Jingzhou

5. Conclusion

This article from small and big, in order to better study the tomb beast this category of cultural relics and study the cultural aesthetics of the cultural relics of chu, from the chu culture in the selection of funeral customs, and then from the funeral customs in the selection of chu tombs in the most typical representative of the artifacts - tomb beasts for exploration, layers of cocoon, from the very typical chu tombs in the selection of the jiangling tianxing guan tomb one, this higher regulation of chu tombs unearthed in the wood carving of the two-headed tomb beasts are This high-profile Chu tomb unearthed in the wood carving double-headed beast of the tomb is the culmination of the development of Chu-style beast of the peak period, in some ways can reflect the situation of the most powerful Chu culture at that time, the people's aesthetic preferences and beliefs at that time.

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