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## Inheritance of Traditional Dragon Patterns in Modern Design

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# Inheritance of Traditional Dragon Patterns in Modern Design

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**Abstract.** Taking the traditional dragon pattern as the breakthrough point, this paper discusses its wide application in modern design fields such as logo design, poster design, packaging design, decoration design, corporate visual identity design, product modeling design and so on. The dragon pattern is not only a symbol of ancient Chinese power, but also has more symbolic significance and symbol function. It is proposed that the use of dragon pattern is one of the means of inheriting traditional culture, and it is also the key to inheriting traditional cultural connotation.

## 1. Preface

In China's extensive and profound traditional art, dragon pattern is one of the most representative patterns. It is not only the product of the imagination of the Chinese working people, but also the symbol of power in ancient China. As for the image of dragon, the most common saying is "horn like deer, head like camel, eye like rabbit, neck like snake, abdomen like mirage, scale like fish, claw like eagle, palm like tiger, ear like ox". That is to say, choosing the animal body that exists in nature partially constitutes the dragon in legend and giving it powerful ability. It comes from people's worship of nature and the beautiful desire of fruitful grain. In ancient China, the image of dragon can only be used by the ruler with the highest power, which is the embodiment and symbol of power. Modern dragon pattern is no longer the monopoly of the ruler, but the significance of symbolizing dignity and power has been passed down and become the material used by modern designers.

## 2. Extreme simplification of dragon pattern

In ancient China, the dragon is the exclusive image of the ruler that is the symbol of power and dignity. It can only be used in the ruler's own application system, which is used relatively in small scope. This is the characteristic of the ancient Chinese imperial culture. It is important significance of the existence of the dragon pattern to deify the ruler with the image of the dragon in order to stabilize his dominant position and power.

The re-creation of dragon pattern in modern has eliminated the power connotation of dragon image. First of all, the understanding and inheritance of dragon pattern in modern design think that dragon is the symbol of the Chinese nation, and usually called the descendants of the Chinese as the descendants of the dragon. Secondly, the dragon is a symbol of dignity, and the use of dragon pattern is a subconscious enhancement of the product. The symbol of Huaxia Bank originates from the Yulong of national treasure in China (figure 1). Yulong is a classic artifact of Hongshan culture in the Neolithic Age. As a moral image of the national spirit, the dragon pattern adopted by the symbol of Huaxia Bank also conforms to the meaning of "Huaxia". There are similarities and differences



between them. Dragon is not only the representative of the Chinese nation, but also the representative of Huaxia Bank. The simplified dragon sculpture is completed by brush, forming a graphical visual effect. The square inside the logo is the chip symbolizing modern science and technology, but also the hollow place of ancient coins. The final graphic is the fusion of traditional and modern.



Figure 1. Symbol of Huaxia Bank.

### 3. Technicalization of dragon pattern

There are strict restrictions on the use of traditional dragon pattern forms. Whether in the application of architectural art, etiquette and clothing, or daily necessities, it mainly serves the idea of sovereignty and divinity. At this time, the dragon pattern is mostly realistic, and can be applied in the main pattern, suitable pattern, decorative pattern, etc., regardless of the way, there is a set of strict standards.

In modern design, dragon pattern has more means of expression, especially with the popularity of computers, the use of design software to re-create traditional patterns, the addition of technical means, so that dragon pattern has more possibilities of expression. Designer Liu Nan's Qianlong in the Abyss and Flying Dragon in the Heaven are refined and processed on the basis of traditional dragon patterns (figure 2). By using modern computer technology and incorporating scientific and technological expression techniques, the dragon patterns have a certain sense of technology. The dragon image accomplished by computer technology has abandoned the planarization and stationarization of traditional patterns. By dealing with the virtual-real relationship of points, lines and planes, it not only retains the most essential characteristics of the dragon, but also vividly expresses the dynamic sense of the dragon. It is the change brought about by science and technology, and also the new means of integrating traditional patterns with modern design.

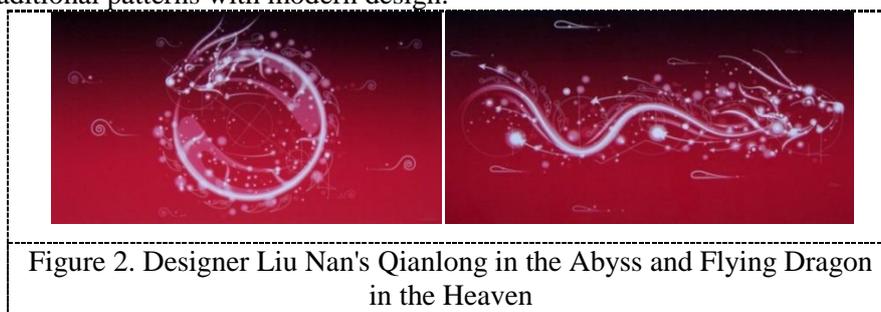


Figure 2. Designer Liu Nan's Qianlong in the Abyss and Flying Dragon in the Heaven

### 4. Dragon pattern in shape

The application of dragon pattern in traditional pattern is mainly around the ruler's clothing, food, shelter and transportation, for example clothing, daily necessities, furniture, architecture and so on. It is the most direct way to present the dragon pattern symbolizing the status of ruler on the carrier with specific materials and techniques without any other narration and elaboration.

For the modern application of traditional patterns, there are many application methods, such as direct application, meaning application, creative application, associative application and artistic conception application. Among them, direct application is the simplest way. When the theme coincides, the original pattern of traditional patterns is directly adopted. It is a direct way to modernize traditional patterns to save time and effort. The wine packaging design of the National Pavilion in the figure below combines realistic dragon pattern with cylindrical packaging design (figure 3). The use of dragon pattern as a visual element is closely related to the brand's advertising slogan " Speaking

for Chinese Culture ". As a symbol of the Chinese nation, dragon is one of the representative images of Chinese culture. The application of dragon pattern is a plus for the packaging of National Pavilion.



Figure 3. Packaging Design of National Pavilion

### 5.Branding of dragon pattern

In modern sense, the application of traditional dragon pattern is actually the design of the personal image system of the ruler. It involves all aspects of the ruler's life. By creating a personal image of the ruler as a symbol of power, its main purpose is to safeguard inviolable and supreme privileges.

In modern logo design, designers often extract valuable elements of dragon pattern to form a new visual image, and derive the new image as the core graphics into brand design or system design. Hong Kong designer Chen Youjian's new brand image for Hong Kong is based on the flying dragon as the prototype, transforming the solemn and stereotyped dragon in the traditional design into a colorful and lively ribbon dragon (figure 4) . The dragon image, which is full of vigor and the flavor of the times, shows the background of Hong Kong as a special administrative region of China, and also represents the flexibility of Hong Kong people. The blue and green color of the ribbon is the embodiment of the sustainable design concept, while the red is the Lion Mountain which represents the spirit of Hong Kong. Applying the new image to Hong Kong's public areas, such as knife flags on roads, double-decker buses and ferry vehicles in Victoria Harbour, it is an application system for brand image design.



Figure 4. Designer Chen Youjian's Hong Kong Brand Image Design

### 6.Product Derivation of Dragon Pattern

It is widely used in traditional dragon designs, which is applied in different fields in different ways, both in plane form and in three-dimensional form. For example, as one of the important image elements of porcelain, dragon pattern uses the shape of porcelain as the medium for plane decoration. As an important part of Chinese architectural art, the three-dimensional dragon pattern embodies the essence of dragon culture. In any case, the dragon pattern is used for the ruler's power.

In modern design, the interpretation of dragon pattern is diversified. Its shape varies with the design carrier. The transformation of dragon pattern in two-dimensional space and three-dimensional space brings a new visual experience. The work "Dragon Head" of designer Yu Chunxi adopts a highly generalized and refined method to design the abstract new product that integrates the meaning of the faucet with the practicability of the faucet (figure 5) . Designers skillfully combine the two objects that have common text element " Dragon Head" to design new products closely related to life. The faucet not only has certain practicability, but also reflects the designer's reference and Reflection on the relationship between dragon and water in traditional Chinese culture.



### 7. Conclusion

Facing the rich resources of Chinese traditional culture and art, we should deeply comprehend and appreciate the artistic spirit and aesthetic appreciation in the tradition, especially the meaning and spirit of traditional culture and art. This is the result of the long-term precipitation of the Chinese nation and the unique national soul of the Chinese nation. Only by integrating traditional art with modern design concepts, we can truly find Chinese design that belongs to our nation.

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