



# 商周青铜器 幻想动物纹研究

Study of Decorations on  
Ancient Chinese Bronze Wares

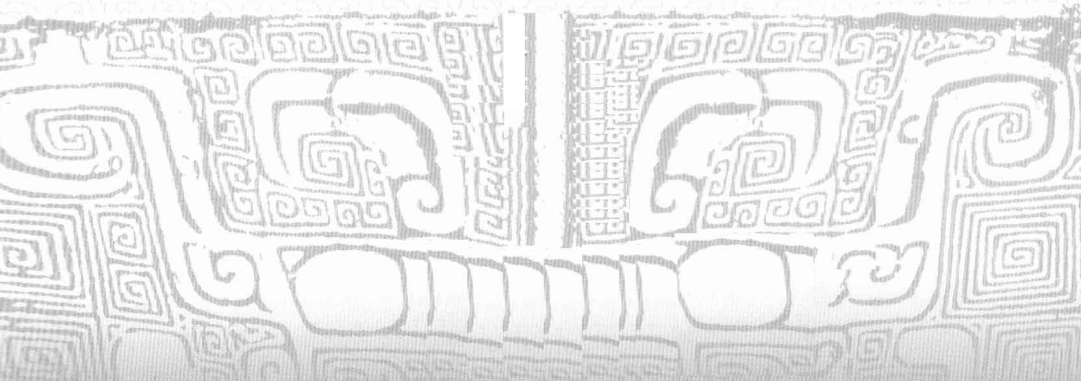
段 勇 著

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## 序

段勇博士在文博系统工作有年,80年代末任职于中国历史博物馆,后到国家文物局,最近又调至故宫博物院。这样的经历,使他有特殊机会直接观察和接触珍贵文物,特别是引起他浓厚兴趣的古代青铜器。通过长时间的研究积累,段勇博士撰成《商周青铜器幻想动物纹研究》一书,即由上海古籍出版社印行。蒙他要我写几句话,正好我一贯认为青铜器纹饰的研究非常重要,故乐于从命。

现代的青铜器研究,与传统金石学的路数有根本区别。过去金石学家著录和研究青铜器,志在证经补史,他们所侧重的是铭文,以致许多无铭器物遭到忽视弃置,有铭器物也每每只有铭文传流。今天研究青铜器,则应并重其形制、纹饰、铭文、功能、工艺及艺术性质等方面,作多角度的综合研究,而纹饰一项尤有关键的意义。

青铜器仅有一部分具有铭文,但几乎所有的青铜器都有纹饰(素面在一定意义上也是一种纹饰)。在青铜器的各种因素中,纹饰的时代性、地域性最为鲜明,流迁变化最是敏感,就像服装的时尚一样。因此,我常说纹饰可称作青铜器的“语言”,能告诉人们许许多多的信息。然而,国内学者对青铜器纹饰的研究成果相对较少,这可能还是没有完全摆脱只重铭文的传统偏见的

缘故。

青铜器纹饰研究水准的提高,是与考古学的进步发展分不开的。现代的青铜器研究,本来是考古学的一个组成部分,因而同样适用类型学等考古学的科学方法。近年发表的一些在青铜器纹饰研究方面有突出贡献的论作,如中国社会科学院考古研究所王世民、陈公柔、张长寿等先生《西周青铜器分期断代研究》所收关于鸟纹、兽面纹、窃曲纹的专题论文,便是这样方法的实践。

段勇博士的这部《商周青铜器幻想动物纹研究》,正是贯彻同样的方法。全书在第一章简要回顾国内外学者对商周青铜器纹饰研究的主要历程之后,集中就这一时期最常见的三种纹饰——兽面纹(即饕餮纹)、夔龙纹和鸟纹逐一作类型学的分析,并且指出各纹饰的时代变迁与地域差异。各章后,又都附有该种纹饰的“标本图”和“断代表”,甚便于读者使用。

书中将这三种纹饰都称为“幻想动物纹”,是把握住了这些纹饰的共同特点。大家知道,用动物的形象去装饰器物,本是世界上诸多文明的常见习惯。中国古代青铜器上作为纹饰的动物,其特点是在自然界并不存在,而是集合若干自然动物的因素而成。例如所谓夔龙,往往角似鹿,首似牛,身似蛇,鳞鳍似鱼,足爪似鸟,这就和心理学家弗洛伊德在《梦的解释》里讲的梦幻人物一样,不是客观的肖形写真。由此出发,段勇博士进行了深入讨论,参考了文化人类学、神话学的不少论点,确实是很有启发的。希望段勇博士今后把这方面探索持续下去。

在阅读本书的时候,我还联想到多年来在我心中萦绕的一个问题,就是青铜器研究中专门名词的统一与规范化。这一学科分支有大量专有名词,包括纹饰,但诸家分歧很多,容易造成混淆紊乱。在翻译成外文的时候,问题更是复杂,莫衷一是。在学科业已相当成熟的当前情况下,这种现象亟需加以改变,应该加强有关方面的

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研究整理,逐步推进,最后在适当的时机,召开专门名词的制订会议。相信做到这一点,会使青铜器研究更迅速顺利地前进。

李学勤

2003年11月3日于北京昌运宫寓所

## 再版序言

在我的印象中,文物考古类图书能出第二版的并不多见,段勇先生《商周青铜器幻想动物纹研究》一书,在第一版之后仅仅过了六年就等来了再版的机会,更是少之又少。在第一版序言中,著名学者李学勤先生对该书作了全面而中肯的评价,我完全同意李先生的意见。作者嘱我利用再版的机会也说几句话,我仅就读过该书的一点感想略作补充,以与作者讨论并求教于方家。

纹饰与器形、铭文、铸造工艺、合金成分共同构成了青铜器研究的基本内容。从青铜器研究的学术史来看,铭文因能“证经补史”,一直是重点研究对象;器形因与使用功能和礼仪制度有关,历来亦为研究者看重,现代考古学传入中国以后,借助器物类型学方法更日益成为分期断代研究的重要依据;铸造工艺与合金成分,随着现代科学技术、方法大量运用于考古学,更成为深入了解当时社会经济结构、生产力发展水平新开拓出的研究领域;纹饰,虽然以战国的《吕氏春秋·先识览》“周鼎著饕餮,有首无身,食人未咽,害其及身”为例,很早就开始受到人们的注意,但因像兽面纹、夔龙纹等一类主体纹饰难以与实际存在的特定的动物相对应,充满神秘意味,从而在讲求实证的研究环境里却相对受到冷落。《商周青铜器幻想动物纹研究》把青铜器纹饰作为研究对象,可以说是选择了一个“冷门”。不过,饕餮、夔龙、神鸟等主体纹饰无疑又是冷门中研究

的热点。

该书首先比较系统地回顾了我国青铜器纹饰研究的历史,从中可以看出历来重视义理探讨的传统和在这方面取得的成就;其次,借助考古类型学方法和考古学文化区系类型理论对青铜器上最流行的饕餮、夔龙、神鸟三种纹饰进行了型式分析和分区,梳理了其发展演变的规律;最后,在此基础上探讨了上述三种所谓“幻想动物纹”的属性及其可能反映的社会意识。我对这部书是作过相当认真研读的,我认为,最后这一部分虽然篇幅最短,但却是本书的亮点。它与第一部分相呼应,吸收前贤研究的精华,延续并发展了前贤研究重视义理的传统,又借助第二部分的分期和分区成果展开讨论,以帮助推导纹饰的属性,作出了自己的论断。逻辑严密,方法得当。最值得关注的是,在这一部分的研究中,作者引入了民族学和艺术心理学的理论和方法,使读者可以从新的角度来看待和理解传统问题,开拓新的研究领域和新的研究思路,尤其是涉及到这类与思想观念、社会意识密切相关的问题。学术研究是接力棒,继承创新,与时俱进,是学术进步永恒的规律。虽然本书的写作只是作者的一种尝试,其所作具体论断乃会不断提出新的挑战和讨论,但对青铜器纹饰和其他相关研究来说,仍具有启发和参考意义。

这部书是作者在其博士论文基础上补充修改完成的,在他读博士和撰写论文期间,他投入了太多的精力,付出了太多的艰辛。他和一般同学不同,他是在职攻读学位的,听课的时间经单位领导批准虽是保证了,但大量的参考书和作业却都要他在下班之后的晚上去完成。我劝他在职生可以延长毕业时间,他硬是不给自己开这个绿灯,硬是准时参加论文答辩并顺利通过,准时毕业了。时间过得真快,如今他走出北大校门已过去七八年了,我看他仍然有那么股子劲头,仍然在做好本职工作的同时不忘做些与自己业务有关的研究,他在故宫博物院工作期间,不仅写了多篇论文,还连续出版了



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两本有关博物馆学的专著,的确是令人高兴的。其实我认为,无论干什么,工作之余在业务上有些追求,不仅不会影响本职工作,反而会有所助益,许多例子都说明了这个问题,我希望段勇能按照这个路子继续走下去。

李伯谦

2012年3月

# Study of Decorations on Ancient Chinese Bronze Ware

## I

Shang and Zhou (Western Zhou and the Spring and Autumn Period) Dynasties, the heyday for Chinese Bronze Age, have directly established China as a country with an ancient civilization in the world. The bronze ware decorations in that age were important carriers of social ideology in ancient China, and serve as the ciphers that later generations have been trying to decipher to gain insight into the society of that time.

The history for the study of China's bronze ware decorations has lasted for 2700 years ever since the Spring and Autumn Period. It can be roughly divided into five stages.

Embryo stage: the Spring and Autumn Period and the Period of Warring States (770 BC ~ 221 BC). *Zuo Zhuan · The Third Year of Xuangong* keeps the earliest record of the bronze ware decorations. *Lu's Spring and Autumn Annuals* indicates the name, shape, meaning and functions of the bronze ware decorations. Somehow, no illustrations are attached to the denomination, so it is hard for us to match the names with

the decorations they refer to, which left a myth through all ages.

Stagnation stage: from Qin Dynasty to the Five Dynasties (221 BC ~ 960 AD). The turbulence of the times and the tremendous cultural changes impeded the study of bronze ware decorations for a thousand years. The *Records of the Historian · the Aristocratic Zhao's, Ode to Two Capitals · Poem of Precious Vessels, Ode to Capital of Wu, San Li Picture Variorum* preserve some valuable materials about the decorations, but such materials are generally fragmentary and want of creative ideas.

Development stage: Northern and Southern Song Dynasties (960 ~ 1279). *Kaogu Antique Illustrated Catalog* by Lv Dalin and *Xuanhe Bogu Collection* by Wang Fu made great contributions in the history of decoration study: 1. Denominate the decorations; 2. Name large quantities of bronze wares according to the decorations; 3. Draw the decorations also while portraying the wares; 4. Study the implication of the decorations; 5. Study the decoration crafts; 6. Authenticate the views of the predecessors. The two books are epoch-making in the history of decoration study. However, the main purpose of these two people is to verify the classics and amend the historical records. Therefore their research is dominated by the inscription on the wares and only supplemented with the description of decorations.

Waning stage: Yuan, Ming and Qing Dynasties (1279 ~ 1911). Epigraphy came to its height of prosperity but also declined in this time while the study of decorations never regained its past glamour. However, *Xiqing gujian Collection* spurred the revival of the epigraphy, but it failed to achieve the same with decoration study.

Revival stage: Republic of China and People's Republic of China (1911 ~ present). The introduction of the modern archaeology from the

west into China reenergized the study of decorations. *Songzhai Jijin Collection* by Rong Geng is the earliest book of rubbings systematically recording the decorations, while his *General Research on Bronze Wares in Shang and Zhou Dynasties* is the first monumental work that comprehensively studies the bronze wares in ancient China and focuses on the study of decorations. Guo Moruo initiated the systematic and phased study of ancient bronze ware decorations while Li Ji was the first to classify the decorations by referring to the archaeological concept of the west. *Bronze Ware Decorations in Shang and Zhou Dynasties* edited by Ma Chengyuan is the earliest monograph on bronze ware decorations in China. Cheng Gongrou and Zhang Changshou made the in-depth, phased and dynasty-specific study on certain decorations. *Bronze Ware of the Ancient China* by Zhu Fenghan has been a comprehensive work on China's ancient bronze wares up to now.

The review of the relevant studies abroad: Hamada Kosaku has initiated the idea of combing the research methods of traditional Chinese epigraphy with those of the modern archaeology in the west. Hayashimi Nao is the most prolific expert with the greatest accomplishment among Japanese scholars dedicated to the study of bronze ware decorations of the ancient China. The approach and achievement of Bernhard Karlgren represent a peak for the European and American scholars who are specialized in this kind of study. Zhang Guangzhi systematically applies western theories in his study and attempts to analyze decorations with the aid of the computer.

The existing problems: 1. Contemporary scholars in China generally neglect the study on the meaning of the decorations, which is a deviation from the time-honored tradition; to study bronze ware decorations from the

perspective of their connotations. 2. The study on the classification of bronze ware decorations is still under development and the existing theories have their own merits and flaws. 3. Evident defect exists in perceiving the profound meanings of the bronze ware decorations by using theories and materials in the relevant areas.

## II

With diversified patterns, large quantities, rich and changeable styles and prominent position in decoration, the animal design on the bronze wares prevailed in the Shang and Zhou Dynasties. The inexistent fantastic animal designs such as the beast mask design, Kui dragon design and the mythical bird design have long been the main target for the domestic and foreign scholars who study the decorations on the bronze ware in the Shang and Zhou Dynasties.

According to the shape of the most changeful part—the horns (or ears in substitution), the beast mask designs fall into the following categories: the ox's horn designs, the ram's horn designs and the hog's ear designs as well as few metamorphous designs. In order to achieve the effect of a direct-view, the English capital letters which resemble the designs in shape are used to represent them; the ox's horn designs are in U or V patterns, with 7 sub patterns and 17 styles; the ram's horn designs are in M or W patterns, with 8 sub patterns and 20 styles; the hog's ear designs are in T or M patterns, with 8 sub patterns and 6 styles; the metamorphous designs are in T, M, F or M patterns, with 6 sub patterns and 2 styles. According to the variations of the patterns, the beast mask designs are divided into three stages and five sections: the first stage

ranges from Erligang stage of Shang Dynasty to phase I of Yin Dynasty ruins; the second stage generally parallels with the period from stage II of Yin Dynasty ruins to the early Western Zhou Dynasty; the third stage is from the middle period of Zhou Dynasty till the late Spring and Autumn Period. According to the regional differences, the beast mask designs were distributed among the four areas: the central plains areas, the northwestern region, the southwestern region and Hunan & Jiangxi areas.

According to the features of shape, Kui dragon designs are in S, Z, W, L, O, C, A, Y and H patterns, 35 sub patterns and 77 styles. In line with the change of the patterns, the Kui dragon designs are divided into three stages and 9 sections: the first stage corresponds to Erligang Stage of Shang Dynasty till the Phase IV of Yin Dynasty ruins; the second stage extends from the early Zhou Dynasty to the late period of the Dynasty; the third stage runs through the Spring and Autumn Period. According to the regional differences, the Kui dragon designs covered five areas: the broad central plains areas, the northwestern region, the southwestern region, southeastern region, and Guangdong and Guangxi areas.

Mythical bird patterns are distinctively put into two classes: one is characterized by the bird head and beast body which is a greatly deformed design; the other is featured with the bird head and bird body design, a rather realistic design. The times when they were prevalent were different: the former prevailed in the Shang Dynasty, and some even outlived the Shang till the early Western Zhou; the latter were flourished in the Western Zhou Dynasty, and few of them had emerged in the late Shang before this. Therefore, we call the metamorphous design of bird-head and beast-body as the bird design of Shang Dynasty and the realistic design of

bird-head and bird-body as the bird design of Zhou Dynasty.

The bird designs of Shang Dynasty are in 9 patterns of S, Z, J, L, K, R, C, Y and H, with 4 sub patterns and 19 styles, while the bird designs of Zhou Dynasty are in 6 patterns of J, C, W, S, Z and O with 11 sub patterns and 19 styles. The former is divided into two stages and three sections; the first stage ranges from Erligang stage of Shang dynasty to Phase I of Yin Dynasty ruins; the second stage runs from Phase II of Yin Dynasty ruins to the early Western Zhou Dynasty. The latter is divided into three stages and four sections; the first stage parallels with Phases II and III of Yin Dynasty ruins; the second stage spans from Phase IV of Yin Dynasty ruins to the late Western Zhou Dynasty; the third stage dates to the early Spring and Autumn Period.

According to the regional differences, the bird designs of the Shang Dynasty were distributed in the central plains areas and the surrounding areas, whereas the bird designs of Zhou Dynasty spread in the northwestern region, the central plains areas and the south region.

### III

Among all the decoration on the bronze wares of the Shang and Zhou Dynasties, the beast mask design is the most eminent decoration with the most mysterious meanings and the most mature structure. The prototype of the beast mark design is the sacrifices such as the oxen, lambs and hogs. However, what many scholars referred to as the “tiger” is in fact the “hog” which has huge ears and is placed together with the ox and lamb. Usually there are the sword-like figures on the back of the hog in T pattern of hog’s ear decorations, which should be the “bristles” of hogs recorded

in the literatures. The conditions of three-sacrifice decorations on the bronze wares are in consistent with the depiction in the oracle inscription, literatures and historical remains, and are supported by the “Law of Trace” proposed by Hegel and “Minimum Image” Theory by Gombrich.

The beast mask designs engraved on the ritual vessels carry three meanings: 1. The indication of the functions. The portrayal of oxen, lambs and hogs on the ritual vessels which respectively contain cooked beef, mutton and meat is identical to people’s practice in the latter ages—to paint corns on the food bowl and weeds on the basin bottom. 2. For sacrifice. *Book of Rites · Jiao Te Sheng* says “a man of honor in the ancient times who exploited the animals would reward them... he would stand in front of them and worship them.” 3. Substitution for ancestors and gods. The sacrifice, the fundamental medium for communication between gods and human beings, and the creature closest to gods and ancestors, had become the symbols of gods, ancestors and even “emperors”. According to the time of the stage when the beast mask design prevailed, the beliefs and worships represented by the designs have the closest relation with those of the Shang Dynasty (Shang tribe).

The bronze ware decorations of Shang and Zhou Dynasties were dominated by the Kui dragon designs, which were in the most complex forms and remained popular for the longest time. The Kui dragon, a link between the preceding embryonic dragons in the remote ancient times and the standard dragon of the later ages (the body is composed of three sections and the dragon resembles 9 animals), very probably stems from the animal-based totem complex in the clan-ship age. Among the diversified Kui dragon designs on bronze wares in Shang and Zhou Dynasties, only few can be dated back to the birth of the Shang and Zhou



cultures. Besides, only few are found to be from the core cultural zones of the two dynasties, and the Kui dragon designs of that time were usually placed in a subordinate position. It can be inferred that the Kui dragon is not a major god for either Shang or Zhou tribes.

The mystical bird design on the bronze wares of Shang and Zhou Dynasties can be classified into the bird pattern of Shang and the bird pattern of Zhou. The former may be the incarnation of the ancestral god of the Shang tribe (can be called dark bird design) according to its age of prevailing, its relations with the beast mask design and relevant records in the ancient literature. The latter is called phoenix pattern, and phoenix is a divined creature worshiped by Zhou people.

The transitional time from early stage to the middle stage of the Western Zhou Dynasty draws a well-marked line between the fantastic animal designs on the bronze wares of the Shang and Zhou Dynasties. Prior to that time, the fantastic animal designs were multitude in number and rich in patterns and mysterious profiles; after the time, the fewer designs were monotonous in pattern but vivid in forms. This phenomenon should be related with the "Duke Zhou's Reform" and reflect the different beliefs held by the Shang and Zhou societies. Shang people were pious to their gods, and thus their religion was called the Shamanism which evolved into the mainstream belief among the Chinese folks. Since the belief of the Zhou tended to be rational, it can be called ethical code, which developed into the orthodox thought in China.