

Exploring the Formal Beauty of Tang Dynasty Baoxiang Flower Patterns

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ABSTRACT

As one of the most nationalistic plant and flower patterns in Chinese botanical patterns, the Baoxiang pattern is also a classic work of fusion between foreign and local cultures, reflecting the unique cultural phenomenon of the Tang Dynasty. This paper studies the characteristics of its pattern decoration in various periods of the Tang Dynasty and analyzes the formal beauty of it, so as to help the ancient to be used in the present.

KEYWORDS

Baoxiang Pattern; Tang Dynasty; Formal Beauty.

1. INTRODUCTION

Baoxiang flower, also known as Baoxian flower, is based on the characteristics of the pattern of lotus, lotus and peony, with pomegranate, lonicera and other flowers decorative embellishments painted, so it can be called Baoxiang lotus. Baoxiang flower pattern is the most common use of the Tang Dynasty, then, in the Dunhuang Cave murals, gold and silver, porcelain, silk printing and dyeing, as well as a variety of other arts and crafts are a large number of Baoxiang flower pattern. Since Baoxiang flower is a comprehensive deformation of decorative patterns, therefore, there are scholars believe that: "Decorative Baoxiang flower, refers to the peony or lotus as the mother of the artistic processing of a pattern, which draws on the image of the characteristics of the flowers, simplify and refine the programmed, stylized, and therefore rich in decorative beauty. Its petals are shaped like ruyi, the shape is neat, the structure is rigorous, has become a stereotype." [1] In this paper, after a large number of literature on the treasure phase flower decorative pattern comprehensive analysis, access to verify a variety of text and pictures and other related information. In a word, the most typical features of Baoxiang flowers in traditional Chinese arts and crafts decoration are: comprehensive, variegated, complicated, and extremely rich in decorative beauty. [2].

2. CHARACTERISTICS OF TANG DYNASTY BAOXIANG FLOWER DECORATION

Baoxiang flowers in decorative patterns, will be due to the change of the times, economic prosperity and social aesthetic concepts and other factors change, resulting in Baoxiang flower decorations in various periods are not the same, and even in the same period of history, Baoxiang flower decorations may also be significantly different. On the whole, Baoxiang flower pattern in the Tang Dynasty form and color has been greatly developed, and gradually towards the elaborate and gorgeous. The overall form adopts the regimental flower design, the unit petal pattern is no longer constrained by the peach-

shaped lotus petal pattern and constructed in the form of a pair of hooked petals and cloud-curved petals, and the structure has become elaborate and colorful, and a sense of splendor and opulence emerges.

Historians generally divide the Tang dynasty into four time periods. Early Tang (618--704), Sheng Tang (704--780), Middle Tang (781--847), and Late Tang (848- -907). And the stylistic development of decorative patterns generally coincided with the process of social development. The style of Baoxiang pattern of the Middle Tang and Late Tang is relatively close and can be categorized as the same stage.

The Tang Dynasty inherited the Western learning since the Wei and Jin dynasties, and Emperor Tang Taizong absorbed the essence of various national cultures. Baoxiang flower in the integration and development of history, to ensure that it is the original rigorous and regular modeling basis, the form also began to gradually become more bold, and combined with the factors of mythological imagination, Baoxiang flower pattern shows a tendency to rich artistic effect, reflecting the things in the cultural connection, a hundred flowers bloomed, fighting for color, each with its own style. [3,4] In this period, wells are divided into large lotus wells and wells for the heart of the "ten" or "m" word shape and round overlapping two, the former is a continuation of the pattern style of the Sui and Tang dynasties, the latter is the emergence of new pattern styles. One of the turning points in the early Tang Dynasty algal well pattern change is the production of Baoxiang flower, before the lotus kind of pattern style, by a variety of pattern fusion deformation called Baoxiang flower, the center of a small cluster of pomegranate pattern is mainly, the lotus petal edge for the Ruyi cloud head shape, Lonicera more for the edge and to multiple modelling features to reflect the color is bright.[5].

By the time of the Shengtang period, the artworks were greatly exploited, with an endless stream of colorful works. Especially during the reign of Wu Zetian, the artistic style, while maintaining diversity and innovation, successfully balanced the aesthetic qualities of women, in which the coexistence of boldness and softness became a distinctive feature of the Baoxiang flower pattern. At the same time from the Wei and Jin dynasties began to germinate to the pure "aesthetic" as the main feature of the aesthetic consciousness has also been more strongly expressed at this time, the social understanding of the form of beauty also has a richer sense of beauty and demand. Thus, it was gradually finalized, and the three basic petals, namely, side-scroll flower, pair of hooked petals and cloud-curved petals, were formed and freely combined, which was the richest period of the Baoxiang group of flowers. This stage of the treasure phase pattern is both different from the traditional pattern and different from the direct intake of foreign patterns. Such as the 79th cave well heart treasure phase group flower is by four grape leaves and four petals symmetrical organization and become. Under the leaves there are eight flower tip around the eight petals of the flower composed of the flower heart, bright and elegant. Here, no longer see the obvious lotus, its shape of the decorative changes reached its peak, opulent and not lose the momentum of the heavy and majestic characteristics of the entire structure presents a radial situation to the surrounding area, which is precisely the Sheng Tang "tolerance is great" concept leads to the best portrayal of the world scene.[3,5].

Compared to the early Tang, the end of the Tang Baoxiang flower pattern whether in the structure or color modeling have undergone significant changes, the lotus pattern gradually returned to replace the Baoxiang flower pattern, once again appeared in the center of the wells, pattern modeling from the complexity of the simplicity of a single color. The root of the difference between the Baoxiang flower and the separate lotus pattern is that the Baoxiang flower pattern is like the phoenix pattern, the dragon pattern, a kind of completely from the imagination of the designer after the combination of the decorative pattern, not seen in the natural world, while the separate lotus pattern is a certain degree of deformation of the lotus in the real world, exaggerated decorative motifs, so compared with the lotus pattern, the Baoxiang flower pattern has a broader space for imagination, and it can use a more abundant decorative elements. Therefore, compared with the lotus pattern, the Baoxiang pattern has a wider imagination space, and the decorative elements that can be used are more abundant. During this period, the Baoxiang flower pattern is no longer a popular trend, mainly to tea flower

pattern and lotus pattern, their shape is simple, simple color. At the end of the Tang Dynasty, the art of grottoes, like this dynasty, gradually declined, and the structure of the Baoxiang flower composition gradually became less flamboyant and more subtle and introverted.

3. THE FORMAL BEAUTY OF TANG DYNASTY POINSETTIAS

Form is the materialization of meaning, and it is the carrier of the extension of meaning. Decorative patterns often have deep meaning behind their artistic form, and their vitality and charm is not the embodiment of their form's own aesthetic significance, but the continuation of their aesthetic meaning. Baoxiang flower pattern not only contains a rich spiritual connotation, but also the law of formal beauty is fully embodied, but also demonstrated the Tang Dynasty artisans high level of craftsmanship. [6]To determine whether a pattern is a Baoxiang flower pattern, the most important two points: one is, radial symmetrical arrangement, and the second is, the material taken from a mixture of many floral characteristics.

3.1. Rounded and Full

Baoxiang flower pattern is a product of human longing for beautiful things, mostly in the form of "round" as a form of expression, not only refers to the round, in the macro-contains the meaning of "complete", "integration". The petals of the Baoxiang flower are made up of a centerpiece. The petals of the Baoxiang flower are surrounded by layers from the center outward, which is rich and full, but also neat and orderly. [6]In terms of aesthetics, the circle has a sense of flow and fullness; in terms of expression, the complexity and fullness of the petals of the Baoxiang Flower pattern, overlapping and intersecting, the circle can visually make the Baoxiang Flower pattern more atmospheric and expansive, rounded and accessible. The beauty of "circle" in Buddhism not only lies in the shape of the thing itself, but also in the "beauty" of a spiritual realm. The treasure phase pattern is the "round" beauty interpretation of the reunion of the beauty, expressing the unity of form and spirit of man and the natural world and the pursuit of the "roundness" of the realm. In addition, there is also a "reincarnation" in Buddhism, meaning that all beings are born in the six paths as if the wheel is constantly rotating, never stop. Therefore, in the Tang Dynasty ceramics with the main round Baoxiang flower pattern, with its overall symmetry of the structure, conveying a kind of endless, never-ending vitality.

3.2. Imaginary and Exaggeration

Imagination is the psychological activity of human beings to recognize the world and reflect reality, and the formation of patterns is inseparable from imagination. The technique of exaggeration and imagination is also closely related, it refers to a certain characteristic of things (such as the form of size, length, thickness, rigidity and flexibility, square and round, straight and curved, etc.) to highlight, emphasize or exaggerate, in order to highlight their own shape and essential features, to strengthen the artistic effect, so that the original features are more distinctive, more vivid, more typical. [6]Tang Dynasty ceramics in the Baoxiang flower pattern is the lotus, lonicera, peony, pomegranate and other petal forms for exaggerated deformation and simplification, and then multi-layer combination of variation, so that the Baoxiang flower pattern draws on a variety of morphological features at the same time, but also with its own unique artistic effect, this gorgeous exaggerated and intentionally fresh modeling, adding to the Tang Dynasty Baoxiang flower pattern of the level of art and aesthetic significance.

3.3. Symmetry and Balance

Symmetry expresses the same shape and quantity, order and rationality; balance reflects equilibrium; the two organically combine together to constitute visual and psychological equilibrium and stability.

People's pursuit of symmetry and balance, as well as proportionality and other issues deeply reflect human nature, and also indicates the aesthetic psychological orientation and formal requirements of human beings. [6]Since ancient times, Chinese people have always been fond of pairs and regarded even numbers as an omen of good luck and good fortune. The symmetrical structure of Baoxiang Flower pattern not only shows a sense of stability and coordination, but also gives people a symbol of good luck and happiness. The pattern follows the rule of symmetry and is characterized by "beauty". Circle is not only an axisymmetric figure, but also a centrosymmetric figure, the Baoxiang flower pattern is based on the circle, giving people a sense of balance and stability, pomegranate pattern, scrolling clouds and other plant patterns are interspersed with them, a thousand shapes and forms, solemn but not lose the vividness.

4. CONCLUSION

Baoxiang flower is a product of fusion and communication between cultures, as an "imported" lotus pattern since the Tang Dynasty in the long process of development, has accumulated a rich combination of virtual and real, the image of the pattern form, the formation of the Baoxiang flower art symbols with auspicious meanings. Looking for the formal beauty law from the Baoxiang flower pattern, exploring the formal beauty law of rounded fullness, imaginative exaggeration and symmetry and balance, the study of Baoxiang flower pattern is not only the study of artistic form, but also more concerned about the cultural value embodied behind the art of pattern, the value of appreciation and the meaning of the creation of the consideration, so that Baoxiang flower pattern can realize a better inheritance of the development and better dissemination.

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