

The Aesthetic Characteristics of Qing Dynasty Dragon and Phoenix Patterns in Contemporary Fashion Design

- Focused on SS 2015~FW 2022 Collections -

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Abstract

The unique artistic style of traditional Chinese patterns frequently appears on contemporary pieces showcased on the stage during international fashion weeks. As an important component of traditional Chinese culture, the pattern underwent several evolutions and developments, reaching its peak in the Qing dynasty. Therefore, this research aimed to explore the aesthetic characteristics of the Qing dynasty dragon and phoenix costume patterns in contemporary fashion design. In the theoretical background, this paper reviews previous studies on dragon and phoenix patterns and sorts out the characteristics of the changes in dragon and phoenix patterns throughout different periods of Chinese history. In addition, it examines prior research on the aesthetic characteristics of dragon and phoenix patterns and summarizes those characteristics. The dragon and phoenix patterns in the Qing dynasty costumes and their expression in contemporary fashion design are analyzed. Data were obtained from show photos of the four major international fashion weeks from 2015S/S to 2022 F/W in Vogue website. The website showcased 181 pictures of fashion pieces that used dragon and phoenix patterns; among them, there are 88 pictures of the Qing dynasty dragon and phoenix patterns. The aesthetic characteristics of the Qing dynasty dragon and phoenix patterns in contemporary fashion design are mainly manifested in fusion beauty, modern beauty, decorative beauty, and natural beauty. This research provides basic information for future clothing designs using dragon and phoenix patterns and provides different ideas for the application of traditional patterns in contemporary fashion designs. Moreover, this research allows for a better understanding of traditional Chinese culture and the beauty of traditional dragon and phoenix patterns.

Key words: dragon and phoenix patterns, Qing dynasty costume, contemporary fashion design, aesthetic characteristics

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I. Introduction

1. Research background

In today's world, with economic globalization, cultural and artistic exchanges between the East and the West are becoming more and more common. As a country with a long history and culture, China's development has attracted global attention in recent years. The Metropolitan Museum of Art's Costume Institute in New York City (Met Gala/Met Ball), known as the "Oscars of the Fashion Field," held a gala with the theme "China: Through the Looking Glass" in 2015, in which clothes with numerous Chinese elements were showcased. Since then, Chinese elements of fashion have become more central to global fashion, with designers from around the world paying more attention to traditional Chinese culture (Wang, 2015). This is also the reason why this research started with data from 2015. Traditional Chinese patterns visually depict Traditional Chinese culture. It is also an effective way to show "Chinese style" in modern design. For modern design, traditional patterns are of great significance in two aspects: first, traditional patterns objectively record the development and changes in Chinese civilization and serve as an important clue for the study of Chinese aesthetics (Li, 2021); second, traditional patterns provide resources for modern design. Patterns are an important part of traditional culture. In traditional Chinese fashion designs, dragon and phoenix patterns are the most representative patterns. They evolved and developed through different dynasties, culminating in the Qing dynasty, the last feudal dynasty in China. The dragon and phoenix patterns from this period are highly representative and symbolic (Gu & Dai, 2020). As an

important expression of traditional culture, fashion continuously develops according to the changes in the environment based on tradition. Therefore, to more appropriately apply them to contemporary fashion design, it is necessary to understand the features of traditional elements and analyze their aesthetic characteristics. As one of the elements of fashion design, patterns are an important means of capturing different categories of beauty. Thus, research on Qing dynasty dragon and phoenix patterns used in contemporary fashion design has become an important topic.

2. Significance of research

In contemporary fashion design, new popular elements are constantly emerging. These new elements tend to attract a lot of attention in the early stage; however, the attention can be fleeting. The traditional Chinese dragon and phoenix patterns have been developed over thousands of years and have been applied in many designs. At present, research on Qing dynasty dragon and phoenix costume patterns focuses mostly on the development of the patterns throughout history. Currently, there is a lack of research that analyzes their aesthetic characteristics and an even greater lack of research that analyzes their application in contemporary fashion designs. Especially in modern society, it is of great importance to understand the aesthetic value of traditional costumes because it is an expressive function, that is, a function of non-verbal communication (Kim, 2013).

3. Purpose of research

The purpose of this paper is as follows:

First, to understand the changing characteristics of

dragon and phoenix patterns throughout different periods of Chinese history.

Second, to examine prior studies on the aesthetic characteristics of dragon and phoenix patterns and to summarize and organize those characteristics.

Third, to analyze Qing dynasty dragon and phoenix patterns and their use in contemporary fashion design and to summarize their performance characteristics.

Fourth, by summarizing the aesthetic characteristics of modern uses of dragon and phoenix patterns, this paper aims to help more people deeply understand the characteristics and connotations of traditional Chinese costume culture and then realize the unique artistic value of dragon and phoenix patterns in the Qing dynasty costumes, which will provide ideas for the application of traditional patterns in future designs.

4. Research methods and scope

The research used data surveys and case analyses.

First, an investigation of the relevant literature gives the understanding of the development and change of dragon and phoenix patterns in Chinese history. The aesthetic characteristics of dragon and phoenix patterns in costumes were summarized in prior studies. The characteristics of the Qing dynasty dragon and phoenix patterns were analyzed by investigating pictures found in museums and reading related papers. In line with previous studies, this paper analyzes the characteristics of dragon and phoenix patterns in Qing dynasty costumes by referring to four different aspects of design: color, form, composition, and material.

Second, examples were obtained by searching image catalogs of the four major international fashion

weeks from 2015 S/S to 2022 F/W for the release of S/S and F/W Couture, Ready-to-Wear, Resort and Pre-Fall collections on the Vogue website (<https://www.vogue.com/fashion-shows>); 181 designs that used the dragon and phoenix patterns were obtained. After comparing with the dragon and phoenix patterns of the Qing dynasty analyzed in previous papers, 88 examples were selected as a sample for the analysis.

Third, based on prior studies, the aesthetic characteristics of dragon and phoenix patterns are examined. The decorative, natural, modern, and fusion beauty aesthetics were selected and used to analyze the aesthetic characteristics of contemporary fashion designs that use Qing dynasty dragon and phoenix costume patterns.

II. Literature review

1. The evolution of dragon and phoenix patterns

Traditional dragon and phoenix patterns originated in the Shang Zhou period in China. Over time, the overall form of the dragon and phoenix patterns evolved from low-level to high-level, i.e., from simple to complex.

The form of dragon and phoenix patterns from the Shang and Zhou dynasties is abstract; the decoration is mainly composed of straight and curved lines, as shown in <Figure 1> and <Figure 2>. In the Spring and Autumn period and the Warring States Period(Zhan Guo), the dragon and phoenix patterns were relatively slender, emphasizing dynamics and posture, combining both hardness and softness of beauty. At this time, the style of dragon and phoenix patterns gradually



Figure 1.
Shang Zhou period
dragon pattern.
From Lee, (1993).
p. 107.



Figure 2.
Shang Zhou period phoenix
pattern.
From Bian, (2002).
p. 93.



Figure 3.
Warring States Period
dragon pattern.
From Lee, (1993).
p. 108.



Figure 4.
Warring States Period
phoenix pattern.
From Bian, (2002).
p. 94.



Figure 5.
Qin Han dynasties
dragon pattern.
From Lee, (1993).
p. 108.



Figure 6.
Qin Han dynasties
phoenix pattern.
From Bian, (2002).
p. 94.



Figure 7.
Sui Tang dynasties
dragon pattern.
From Song, (2011).
p. 289.



Figure 8.
Sui Tang dynasties
phoenix pattern.
From Bian, (2002).
p. 95.



Figure 9.
Song Yuan dynasties
dragon pattern.
From Lee, (1993).
P. 111.



Figure 10.
Song Yuan dynasties
phoenix pattern.
From Wu et al. (2017).
p. 132.

exhibited a stronger sense of realism, as shown in <Figure 3> and <Figure 4>. In the Qin and Han dynasties, the body parts of the dragon patterns were more detailed and realistic, and the phoenix patterns evolved to rose finch, presenting a body full of beauty, as seen in <Figure 5> and <Figure 6>. During the Sui and Tang dynasties, dragon and phoenix patterns became more realistic in form, containing physical features such as claws, as shown in <Figure 7> and <Figure 8>. In addition, affected by foreign culture, the forms of patterns reflect the artistic style of freedom and fullness. Since the Song dynasty, scales and tentacles have appeared in dragon patterns, and serrated wings have appeared in phoenix patterns. After development in the Song and Yuan dynasties, as shown in <Figure 9> and <Figure 10>, the dragon and phoenix patterns were essentially finalized in the Ming and Qing dynasties, which established the realistic style of dragon and phoenix patterns (Dai, 2020).

2. Aesthetic characteristics of dragon and phoenix patterns

The evolution of dragon and phoenix patterns was

summarized in the previous section, which determined that the characteristics of dragon and phoenix patterns have evolved alongside the development of the societies in which they were found. To better understand this evolution, the aesthetic characteristics of dragon and phoenix patterns will be examined by reference to prior studies. The benchmark for the selection of the prior studies was a survey on the aesthetic characteristics of traditional patterns in Chinese costume culture from ancient to modern times, of which there were no specialized studies on the aesthetic characteristics of dragon and phoenix patterns; therefore, prior studies that included dragon and phoenix patterns were selected for the present investigation.

Kim(2004) concluded that the aesthetic characteristics of traditional Chinese costumes are auspicious beauty, complete beauty, and personal beauty. Auspicious beauty refers to the expression of a good meaning through color. Complete beauty refers to the symmetry of the pattern, its fixed distribution, and the expression of a realistic style. Personal beauty is about reflecting the significance of identity and status.

Ma and Choi(2020) concluded that the essential characteristics are the inheritance of traditional values,

such as those that determined the Qing dynasty's palace attire patterns, the integration of traditional elements with various modern elements, and the pastiche by eclecticism. Other characteristics include a fusion of traditional and modern diverse expression techniques and a fusion of Western costumes and Oriental elements.

According to Su(2013), the traditional costume patterns themselves have symbolic meaning; however, in contemporary fashion design, more emphasis is placed on the expression of design elements than on the meaning of the patterns, that is, on decorative beauty.

According to Kim(2008), in traditional costume culture, natural beauty refers to realistic representations of patterns, sublime beauty to a symbol of authority, and classical beauty to the continuity of tradition. In contemporary fashion design, natural beauty is a realistic representation of the pattern, elegant beauty is a reflection of the Oriental image, and fusion beauty is harmony with Western fashion.

Kim and Kan(2009)'s study concluded that traditional Chinese costumes form realistic representations of patterns and symmetrical compositions, with an emphasis on uniformity. The symbolic beauty refers to the implied significance of royalty. Contemporary fashion design shows a varied use of pattern form and size, with an emphasis on the decorative effect. In addition, traditional patterns in contemporary fashion design do not embody symbolism and are used to emphasize decorative and Oriental images. Expressivity is the use of a wide range of modern material expression techniques and colors according to the designer's sensibilities.

Yu and Choi(2020) concluded that dragon and phoenix patterns symbolized harmony and wholeness

in traditional Chinese costume culture and that in contemporary fashion design, which does not follow the dress hierarchy of ancient society, people are completely free to choose and use motifs that express decorative beauty.

The prior studies' analyses show that, while the terms used by different researchers to distinguish aesthetic characteristics differ slightly, there is overlap in terms of content and meaning.

In summarize, among the aesthetic characteristics of dragon and phoenix patterns that appear in ancient costume culture, the number of repetitions of symbolic beauty is 4 and the number of repetitions of natural beauty is 3. Aside from that, the number of repetitions of personal and classical beauty is 1.

Among the aesthetic characteristics of the dragon and phoenix patterns that appear in contemporary fashion design, the number of repetitions of decorative beauty is 3. Furthermore, the expression of the natural beauty characteristics of dragon and phoenix patterns is the same whether in contemporary fashion design or in ancient costume culture, i.e., they are based on traditional realistic styles and symmetrical compositions, etc., so the number of repetitions of natural beauty is 4. The number of repetitions of modern beauty and fusion beauty is 2, elegant beauty is 1. The symbolic beauty that embodied royalty and auspiciousness in ancient costume culture is not reflected in contemporary fashion design. The contents of the prior studies are organized in <Table 1>.

3. Vogue website

For this research, fashion websites were examined to ensure the objectivity and credibility of the samples. Vogue is a weekly social magazine created by Arthur

Table 1. Aesthetic characteristics of dragon and phoenix patterns in prior studies.

Classification criteria	Author (Year)	Aesthetic characteristics				
		Symbolic beauty	Natural beauty	Personal Beauty	Classical beauty	Others
Ancient	Kim (2004)	Auspicious beauty -color	Complete beauty -Symmetrical composition -Realistic form	Reflecting the significance of identity and status	-	-
	Kim (2008)	Sublime beauty -Authority	Natural beauty -Realistic representation of the pattern	-	The continuity of tradition	-
	Kim (2009)	Symbolic -Royalty	Forming -Realistic form -Symmetries composition	-	-	-
	Yu (2020)	Symbol of harmony and wholeness	-	-	-	-
Number of repetitions		4	3	1	1	0
	Author (Year)	Aesthetic characteristics				
		Decorative beauty	Natural beauty	Modern beauty	Fusion beauty	Others
Modern	Su (2013)	Focus on the decorative aspect of the design elements. -Color contrast -Techniques of fabric expression	-	Reconstruction of modernity	-	-
	Yu (2020)	Decorative	-	-	-	-
	Ma (2020)	-	-	-	Eclecticism of integration	-
	Kim (2009)	Forming -Emphasize decorative effect	-	Expressivity beauty-Modern material techniques -Designer's color sense	-	-
	Kim (2008)	-	Natural Beauty -Realistic representation of the pattern	-	Fusion Beauty -Harmony with Western clothing	Elegant beauty
		3	1	2	2	1
Number of repetitions		3	1	2	2	1

Baldwin Turnure in 1892 that developed into a fashion magazine after the social and economic impact of World War II. The newly born Vogue became a symbol of contemporary fashion design and lifestyle

(Han, 2015). Due to the development of new media, Vogue has been able to overcome the constraints of traditional paper mediums, and the frequency and speed of online updates are far greater than that of a

traditional fashion magazine. Vogue is now globally revered by designers and artists as an authority on “style and fashion” (Qiao, 2018). With a professional fashion perspective, Vogue provides readers with fresh reports on the world’s four major fashion weeks; unlike some other magazines, Vogue’s digital network is not disconnected from its traditional magazine; it is a professional fashion information website (Liu, 2008). Therefore, the Vogue website was used to obtain data for this research.

III. The expression of dragon and phoenix patterns in traditional costumes

1. The expression of dragon and phoenix patterns in Qing dynasty costumes

To examine the characteristics of dragon and phoenix patterns in Qing dynasty costumes, the four aspects of color, form, composition, and material were analyzed based on prior studies <Table 2>.

1) Color

According to Lee(2016), people in the Qing dynasty believed in the five elements of Yin and Yang,

which represent the seasons, orientation, morality, ethics, and other concepts. They also associated colors with five geographical quadrants—cyan with the East, red with the South, yellow with the Center, white with the West, and black with the North. Taking Qing dynasty costumes collected in the Palace Museum as the main source of data, the five colors were extracted by Photoshop software, as in <Figure 11>. The Qing dynasty costumes decorated with dragon and phoenix patterns express two main relationships between the color of the patterns and the base color, one in the form of contrast and one in the same color scheme. In <Figure 12>, the color of the dragon pattern contrasts with the dark base color; in <Figure 13>, the golden dragon pattern is in harmony with the yellow base color.

2) Form

The morphological characteristics of dragon patterns in Qing dynasty costume include Zhenglong, Shenglong, Tuanlong, and Xinglong (Wang, 2015). The forms of the phoenix pattern in Qing dynasty costumes include the Xiangfeng, Tuanfeng, and Lifeng (Liu, 2018). In terms of form, the dragon and phoenix patterns of the Qing dynasty exhibit a realistic style, with different forms representing different meanings. The Tuanfeng is a phoenix forming a circle, symbolizing happiness

Table 2. Classification standards according to prior studies.

Author(Year)	Classification Standards
Gu & Dai (2020)	Form, Composition
Lee (2017)	Form, Color, Composition
Liu (2020)	Form, Color, Composition, Material



Figure 11. The five colors of Qing Dynasty costume.



Figure 12. Contrast color.
From Stone blue eight tuan of clouds and gold dragon pattern zuhanghua women's gua. (n.d.).
<http://www.dpm.org.cn>



Figure 13. Harmony color.
From Bright yellow yarn embroidered cloud gold dragon pattern men's chaopao. (n.d.).
<http://www.dpm.org.cn>



Figure 14. Tuanlog.
From Ruan Weiping. (n.d.).
<http://www.dpm.org.cn>

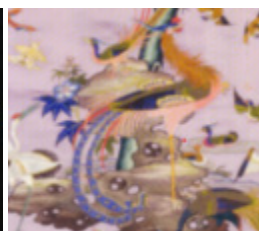


Figure 15. Lifeng.
From Zhang Shuxian. (n.d.).
<http://www.dpm.org.cn>

and completeness, as shown in <Figure 14>. Lifeng is the posture of a phoenix standing, a symbol of nobility and dignity, as shown in <Figure 15>.

3) Composition

In the Qing dynasty, the composition of costume patterns was symmetrical and balanced, which cohered with ancient Chinese philosophy. The compositional forms of patterns all reveal a symmetrical sense of balance. Symmetry is a common form that engenders in people a stable and orderly aesthetic feeling, both visually and psychologically (Gu & Dai, 2020). An example of this is found in <Figure 16>, a Qing dynasty Jifugua with eight round dragon and phoenix patterns evenly and symmetrically arranged in the front and back of the body. This demonstrates that the dragon pattern in the Qing dynasty had a specific composition that was rigorous rather than random.

4) Material

Through the papers on Qing dynasty costume patterns and the presentation of Qing dynasty costumes at the Palace Museum shows, it was determined that Qing dynasty costume materials were mainly derived from natural materials. The sericulture industry peaked during the Qing dynasty, when silk was used to weave

a variety of fabrics (Fan, 2012). The three techniques used for dragon and phoenix patterns are embroidery, Zhuanghua and Kesi, with embroidery being the most common. For example, the dragon pattern in <Figure 17> employs embroidery methods such as satin stitch, slanting stitch, couching, and so on. The exquisite craftsmanship is an artistic treasure of traditional Chinese culture.

The dragon and phoenix patterns in Qing dynasty costumes are very colorful but use only the traditional



Figure 16. Jifugua.
From Fang Hongjun. (n.d.).
<http://www.dpm.org.cn>

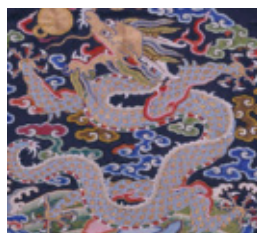


Figure 17. Embroidered dragon pattern.
From Fang Hongjun. (n.d.).
<http://www.dpm.org.cn>

five colors. They also use various forms, and different parts use different forms of patterns based on the regulation. The overall composition is symmetrical and is surrounded by other types of patterns. The material is mainly decorated using various embroidery methods, which makes the dragon pattern of Qing dynasty costumes more exquisite. The aesthetic aim of Qing dynasty costumes was natural beauty, which was reflected in the form, color, material, and pattern of the costumes, all of which focus on harmony and unity with nature. In addition, Qing dynasty costumes greatly reflected social concepts, emphasizing the regulation of costumes from the perspective of rank. The costumes of the Qing dynasty not only reflected a strong natural interest but also showed a strict, introverted, and dignified style.

2. The expression of Qing dynasty dragon and phoenix patterns in contemporary fashion design

The beauty of a costume refers to its aesthetic

characteristics, understood through essential elements such as form, color, and material, or a formative principle that composes and arranges them (Kim, 2013). Therefore, to explore the aesthetic characteristics of the Qing dynasty dragon and phoenix patterns that appear in contemporary fashion design, we analyzed their characteristics from four aspects: color, form, composition, and material. On the Vogue website, we surveyed fashion weeks from 2015 S/S to 2022 F/W for images of S/S and F/W Couture, Ready-to-Wear, Resort, and Pre-Fall collections. There were 181 examples collected that used dragon and phoenix patterns. After comparing them with the Qing dynasty dragon and phoenix patterns analyzed in the previous section of this paper, 88 were chosen as samples for this study.

1) Analysis of data

The 88 samples of contemporary fashion designs using the dragon and phoenix patterns of Qing dynasty costumes are organized in annual order, as shown in <Table 3>; the trend is shown in <Figure 18>.

Table 3. Analysis of data.

Year	Brand/Designer	Brand number	Season	Clothes number
2015	Dries Van Noten	2	F/W Ready-to-Wear	3
	Valentino		F/W Ready-to-Wear	2
2016	Gucci	4	F/W Ready-to-Wear	2
	Paco Rabanne		F/W Ready-to-Wear	3
	Pam &Gela		F/W Ready-to-Wear	1
	Valentino		S/S Couture	2
	Valentino		Resort	2
	Valentino		Pre-Fall	4
	Valentino		Pre-Fall	4
2017	Gucci	5	S/S Ready-to-Wear	2
	Josie Natori		F/W Ready-to-Wear	6
	Marcelo Burlon		S/S Ready-to-Wear	2
	Vionnet		F/W Ready-to-Wear	1
	Alena-akhmadullin		Pre-Fall	2
	Gucci		Pre-Fall	8

Year	Brand/Designer	Brand number	Season	Clothes number
2018	Ashishi	5	S/S Ready-to-Wear	3
	Gucci		Resort	2
	Gucci		F/W Ready-to-Wear	2
	Kenzo		F/W Ready-to-Wear	2
	Les Copains		F/W Ready-to-Wear	3
	Valentino		Pre-Fall	2
2019	Guo Pei	2	S/S Couture	9
	Marine Serre		S/S Ready-to-Wear	2
2020	The Attico	2	S/S Ready-to-Wear	1
	Libertine		S/S Ready-to-Wear	3
2021	Kim Shui	1	S/S Ready-to-Wear	5
2022	Gucci	3	S/S Ready-to-Wear	2
	Kim Shui		S/S Ready-to-Wear	7
	Bronx and Banco		F/W Ready-to-Wear	1
	Kim Shui		F/W Ready-to-Wear	4
Total				88

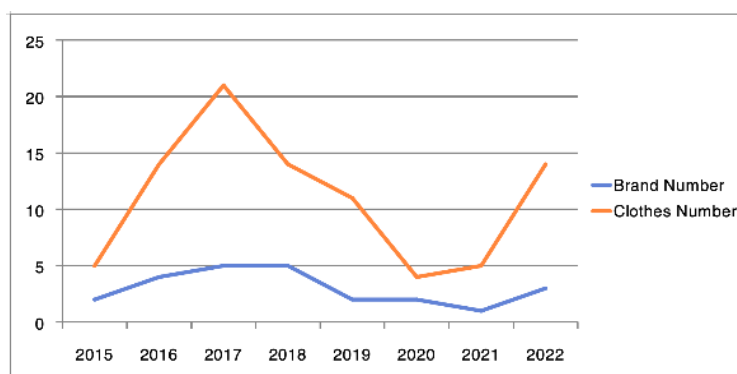


Figure 18. The dragon and phoenix patterns' application trend.

2) Color

The color characteristics of the selected 88 cases were analyzed. Valentino's 2015 F/W Ready-to-Wear long dress featured a strong contrast of colors with a black base and a dragon pattern in red and yellow as decoration (Figure 19). Josie Natori's 2017 F/W Ready-to-Wear short black dress, also in black, shows a dragon pattern decorated with red tracing, featuring a silhouette line that emphasizes the pattern (Figure 20). Kim Shui's 2021 S/S Ready-to-Wear bustier and

trouser set uses cyan colors of different brightness and chroma, with no obvious contrasting relationship between colors, but rather coordinates the base color and pattern with a harmonious, gradual layering characteristic (Figure 21). Using the same method to analyze all the pieces, there are 41 with strong color contrast, 29 with contour line emphasis, 5 with coordinated clothing and pattern colors, and 13 with unclear color characteristics.

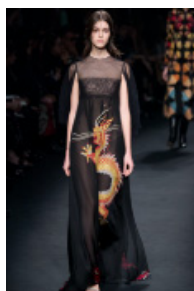


Figure 19. Valentino 2015 F/W-1.
From Valentino
Fall/Winter 2015
Ready-to-Wear. (n.d.).
<https://www.vogue.com>

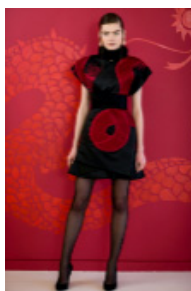


Figure 20. Josie Natori 2017 F/W-1.
From Josie Natori
Fall/Winter 2017
Ready-to-Wear. (n.d.a).
<https://www.vogue.com>



Figure 21. Kim Shui 2021 S/S-1.
From Kim Shui
Spring/Summer 2021
Ready-to-Wear. (n.d.b).
<https://www.vogue.com>

3) Form

The formal characteristics of the selected 88 pieces were analyzed. Valentino's 2016 S/S Couture work is decorated with simple flat geometry and lines forming parts of the dragon pattern, without the direct application of complex traditional motifs, with a figurative simplification (Figure 22). For the Valentino 2016 Pre-Fall piece, a minimalist dragon pattern was paired with a fire pattern, combining to create a dragon spitting fire, a funny secondary design to the traditional dragon pattern (Figure 23). In contrast, the Gucci 2018 Resort shows a fullness of form, abundant in detail and with realistic features (Figure 24). There is also the 2017 F/W Ready-to-Wear work by Josie Natori, in which the dragon pattern form is delicately carved in vivid detail to depict a beard, toes, etc.,

inherited the complicated and exquisite characteristics of the Qing dynasty pattern (Figure 25). The same method was used to analyze all pieces; there were 32 with simplified forms, 27 with realistic forms, and 29 used in combination with other patterns.

4) Composition

The composition characteristics of the selected 88 pieces were analyzed. Gucci's 2017 Pre-Fall work, a pink blazer short jacket, shows a dragon pattern decorated symmetrically on both sides of the chest, giving a sense of balance that reflects consistency and stability (Figure 26). The same goes for the 2019 S/S Couture piece by Guo Pei, with the dragon pattern symmetrically decorated on each leg of the pants (Figure 27). On the contrary, Gucci's 2018



Figure 22. Valentino 2016 S/S-1.
From Valentino
Spring/Summer 2016
Couture. (n.d.b).
<https://www.vogue.com>



Figure 23. Valentino 2016 Pre-Fall-1.
From Valentino
Pre-Fall 2016. (n.d.b).
<https://www.vogue.com>

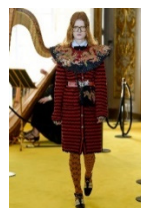


Figure 24. Gucci 2018 Resort-1.
From Gucci
Resort 2018. (n.d.).
<https://www.vogue.com>



Figure 25. Josie Natori 2017 F/W-2.
From Josie Natori
Fall/Winter 2017 Ready-to-Wear.
(n.d.c).
<https://www.vogue.com>

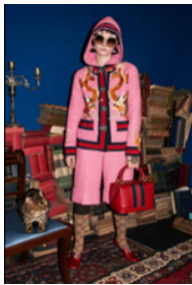


Figure 26.
Gucci 2017 Pre-Fall.
From Gucci Pre-Fall
2017. (n.d.).
<https://www.vogue.com>

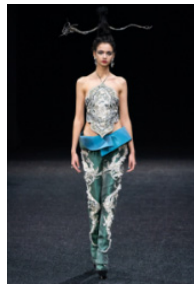


Figure 27.
Guo Pei 2019 S/S-1.
From Guo Pei
Spring/Summer
2019 Couture. (n.d.a).
<https://www.vogue.com>



Figure 28.
Gucci 2018 F/W-2.
From Gucci
Fall/Winter 2018 Ready-to-Wear. (n.d.).
<https://www.vogue.com>



Figure 29.
Paco Rabanne 2016 F/W.
From Paco Rabanne
Fall/Winter 2016 Ready-to-Wear. (n.d.).
<https://www.vogue.com>

F/W Ready-to-Wear black dress, decorated with a dragon pattern only on the lower left, creates a visual abruptness with an asymmetrical character (Figure 28). Paco Rabanne's 2016 F/W Ready-to-Wear work is decorated asymmetrically with a dragon pattern on the left sleeve and chest (Figure 29). Of all the pieces that were analyzed, there were 25 with a symmetric layout and 63 with an asymmetric layout.

5) Material

The material characteristics of the selected 88 pieces were analyzed. Alena-Akhmadullina's 2017 Pre-Fall velvet slip dress is decorated with a novel phoenix pattern consisting of three-dimensional embroidered

patches (Figure 30). Dries Van Noten's 2015 F/W Ready-to-Wear work includes a black short jacket decorated with a dragon pattern of metal and plastic sequins. The two different materials are in harmony with each other and emphasize the effect of surface texture (Figure 31). In contrast, Marine Serre's 2019 S/S Ready-to-Wear work, a tight-fitting jumpsuit with a printed dragon pattern adorning the smooth fabric, has a clean and crisp surface and a simple texture (Figure 32). All pieces were analyzed in the same way, with 70 using three-dimensional materials, 3 combining different modern materials, and 15 using flat printing.

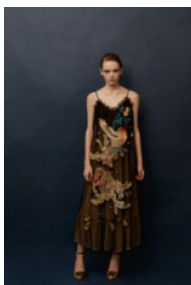


Figure 30. Alena Akhmadullina
2017 Pre-Fall.
From Alena Akhmadullina
Pre-Fall 2017. (n.d.).
<https://www.vogue.com>



Figure 31. Dries Van Noten 2015 F/W.
From Dries Van Noten Fall/Winter 2015
Ready-to-Wear. (n.d.).
<https://www.vogue.com>

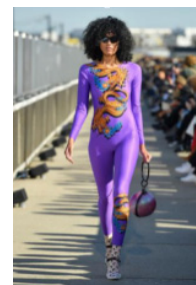


Figure 32. Marine Serre 2019 S/S.
From Marine Serre
Spring/Summer 2019
Ready-to-Wear. (n.d.).
<https://www.vogue.com>

IV. Aesthetic characteristics of Qing dynasty dragon and phoenix patterns in contemporary fashion design

According to the prior studies examined in the theoretical background, the aesthetic characteristics of dragon and phoenix patterns in contemporary fashion design that have been jointly derived by researchers include decorative beauty, natural beauty, modern beauty, and fusion beauty. Therefore, decorative, natural, modern, and fusion beauty aesthetics were selected and used to analyze the aesthetic characteristics of contemporary fashion designs that use Qing dynasty dragon and phoenix costume patterns.

1. Decorative beauty

Decoration refers to features for viewing and enjoyment. Contemporary fashion designs using dragon and phoenix patterns of Qing dynasty costumes express decorative beauty through high brightness and high saturation colors or strong color contrasts, an emphasis on contour lines, asymmetrical composition, and three-dimensional material. A representative example is <Figure 33>, a work from Libertine's 2020 S/S

Ready-to-Wear collection, in which the black jacket is decorated with a dragon pattern made of many small crystals, which is extraordinarily colorful under the refraction of light, enhancing the visual effect and exemplifying the beauty of decoration. <Figure 34> is a work from Valentino's 2016 Pre-Fall collection. The green sweater is decorated with a large dragon pattern and has dark blue as the base color sample, with orange and red dragon claws and whiskers. It is embellished with white dragon scales and contains black edge lines to emphasize the outline, which enhances the decorative effect of the dragon pattern. <Figure 35>, a work from the Bronx and Banco's 2022 F/W Ready-to-Wear collection, is a translucent mesh jumpsuit decorated with metallic dragon patterns. The contrasts between transparent and opaque materials enhance the decorative nature of the dragon patterns. The three-dimensional dragon scales emit a dazzling light, and the curved dragon pattern echoes the curves of the human body, exemplifying decorative beauty.

2. Natural beauty

Natural beauty is beauty enriched with the characteristics of traditional culture, without a lot of artificial characteristics. Contemporary fashion designs

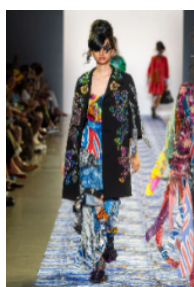


Figure 33. Libertine 2020 S/S.
From Libertine Spring/Summer 2020
Ready-to-Wear. (n.d.).
<https://www.vogue.com>

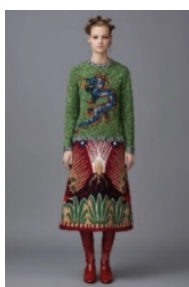


Figure 34. Valentino 2016 Pre-Fall-2.
From Valentino
Pre-Fall 2016. (n.d.a).
<https://www.vogue.com>

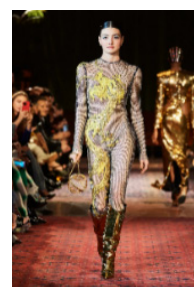


Figure 35. Bronx and Banco 2022 F/W.
From Bronx and Banco Fall/Winter
2022 Ready-to-Wear. (n.d.).
<https://www.vogue.com>

using the dragon and phoenix patterns of Qing dynasty costumes express traditional beauty through the reproduction of traditional patterns and symmetrical composition. <Figure 36> is a work from Josie Natori's 2017 F/W Ready-to-Wear collection. The black jacket is decorated with symmetrical dragon patterns on both sides, and the dragon patterns are exquisitely intricate and realistic, inheriting the characteristics of Qing dynasty dragon patterns while also combining them with Qing dynasty seawater and cloud patterns, giving the entire costume a subtle, dignified feeling and exuding natural beauty. <Figure 37> is a work from Valentino's 2016 S/S Couture line that uses embroidery to create dragon patterns, "寿" (longevity) patterns, cloud patterns, and seawater patterns on a beige satin coat. A variety of auspicious motifs from the Qing dynasty were followed and used in combination. The wide silhouette and flat cutting effect also inherited the stylistic characteristics of Qing dynasty costumes, exemplifying natural beauty.

3. Modern beauty

Modern beauty refers to beauty imbued with modern

feelings and culture (<https://stdict.korean.go.kr>). Fashions come and go with the times. Consumers are more willing to choose more diverse and free fashion according to their preferences and personalities rather than copying the fashion of a certain era (Yoon, 2006). By analyzing examples of contemporary fashion design that uses dragon and phoenix motifs from Qing dynasty costumes, we find modern beauty expressed in strong color contrasts, the simplification of complex dragon and phoenix pattern forms, asymmetrical compositions, and the use of modern materials. A representative example is <Figure 38>, a 2018 Pre-Fall work of Valentino's with a single dragon pattern decorating the back of a black leather coat. This large-scale use of an individual dragon pattern and asymmetrical composition did not exist in the Qing dynasty, and the contemporary fashion design connotes traditional motifs while presenting modern beauty. There is also <Figure 27>, which is Guo Pei's work for the 2019 S/S Couture collection. The dragon pattern is decorated with irregular sequin material, which obviously enhances the three-dimensional sensation of the dragon pattern. The traditional pattern is expressed with modern materials in line with modern aesthetics, instead of adhering to tradition, and exemplifies modern beauty.

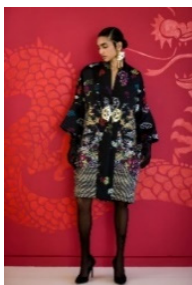


Figure 36.
Josie Natori 2017 F/W-3.
From Josie Natori Fall/Winter 2017
Ready-to-Wear. (n.d.b).
<https://www.vogue.com>



Figure 37.
Valentino 2016 S/S-2.
From Valentino Spring/Summer
2016 Couture. (n.d.a).
<https://www.vogue.com>

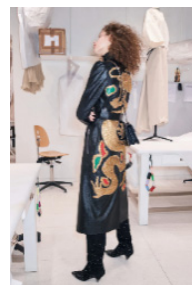


Figure 38.
Valentino 2018 Pre-Fall.
From Valentino Pre-Fall
2018. (n.d.).
<https://www.vogue.com>



Figure 39.
Vionnet 2017 F/W.
From Vionnet Fall/Winter
2017 Ready-to-Wear. (n.d.).
<https://www.vogue.com>



Figure 40.
Kim Shui 2021 S/S-2.
From Kim Shui Spring 2021
Ready-to-Wear. (n.d.a).
<https://www.vogue.com>

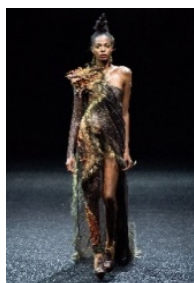


Figure 41.
Guo Pei 2019 S/S-2.
From Guo Pei Spring/Summer
2019 Couture. (n.d.b).
<https://www.vogue.com>

<Figure 39> is Vionne's 2017 F/W Ready-to-Wear piece. The bottom of the blue satin dress is decorated with a yellow phoenix pattern, which greatly simplifies the phoenix pattern of the Qing dynasty. The application of contrasting colors, simplified patterns, and asymmetrical compositions creates a simple and clear visual effect that embodies modern beauty.

4. Fusion beauty

"Fusion" is the basic element of beauty widely included in art and culture (Kim, 2008). The historical significance of clothing lies not only in distinguishing the external expression of contemporary fashion design but also in its integration with the internal cultural background, which is characterized by the styling elements of clothing (Yoon, 2006). By analyzing of contemporary fashion designs that use Qing dynasty dragon and phoenix patterns, fusion beauty is expressed as the fusion of the same color palette, the fusion of traditional patterns and modern patterns, the fusion of different modern materials, and the fusion of Oriental patterns and Western pieces of clothing. A representative example is Kim Shui's 2021 S/S Ready-to-Wear piece <Figure 40>, which uses different

shades of cyan to harmonize the overall relationship between the dragon pattern and the garment, giving a harmonious and unified visual effect. Another example is Guo Pei's 2019 S/S work <Figure 41>, where the dragon pattern on the black translucent dress uses a combination of modern three-dimensional materials and feather materials. By using modern materials, the piece creates a funky and magnificent look not found in Qing dynasty costumes that reflects fusion beauty.

V. Conclusion

The purpose of this study is to provide a greater understanding of the unique artistic value of the dragon and phoenix patterns in Qing dynasty costumes and to provide ideas for the application of traditional patterns in contemporary fashion design. The conclusions of this study are as follows.

First, through the preliminary study of the use of dragon and phoenix patterns in Chinese history, it was found that these designs first appeared during the Shang and Zhou dynasties, continued to develop and become increasingly complex until reaching a mature state in the Qing dynasty, and have since been developed and used in contemporary fashion design. Our analysis shows that the prevalence of contemporary fashion designs that use Qing dynasty dragon and phoenix patterns began to gradually increase in 2015, peaked in 2017, and then declined until 2022, where it again began to increase.

Therefore, it is speculated that the gradual increase of contemporary fashion designs with Qing dynasty dragon and phoenix patterns was influenced by the 2015 Met Gala, and the period lasted for three years. After reaching the peak, the application decreased and

then picked up again in 2022.

Second, through the analysis of the colors, forms, composition, and materials used, several common characteristics of the dragon and phoenix patterns in contemporary fashion design were determined. Regarding color, it was found that the patterns exhibited strong contrasts of colors, matching of the same colors, and an emphasis on contours. Regarding form, it was found that the patterns exhibited simplification of form, combination, and redesign of traditional and non-traditional patterns, and an inheritance of traditional realistic patterns. Regarding composition, the patterns were characterized by symmetrical composition and asymmetric composition. In terms of materials, they were characterized by the use of three-dimensional materials, the combination of different modern materials, and planar printing materials.

Third, the aesthetic characteristics of Qing dynasty dragon and phoenix patterns in contemporary fashion design are fusion beauty, modern beauty, decorative beauty, and natural beauty. Fusion beauty was exemplified in the fusion of colors in the same color system, the blend of traditional patterns and modern patterns, the fusion of different modern materials, and the combination of Oriental patterns and Western dress. Modern beauty was manifested in strong color contrasts, the simplification of complex dragon and phoenix patterns, asymmetric composition, and the use of modern materials. Decorative beauty was achieved with high brightness and high saturation of colors or strong contrasts of colors, emphasizing a single contour, asymmetric composition, and the use of three-dimensional materials. Natural beauty was achieved by the reproduction of traditional patterns and the inheritance of traditional symmetrical composition.

In this study, we understood the tendency of

application of dragon and phoenix patterns in contemporary fashion design over the past years, and analyzed the aesthetic characteristics of dragon and phoenix patterns from Qing dynasty costumes in contemporary fashion design, which is of great research significance. This study has made some contributions to the dissemination of the aesthetic value of Chinese traditional patterns and the application of dragon and phoenix patterns in future design. However, as the data in the case analysis consisted of graphic pictures, there are may be errors in the visual analysis of details and materials. Therefore, in the future, more objective case data can be collected for further study, not only analyzing dragon and phoenix patterns in the Qing dynasty, but also covering other traditional patterns.

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현대 패션 디자인에 나타난 청나라 복식의 용·봉황 문양의 미적 특성

- 2015S/S~2022F/W 컬렉션을 중심으로 -

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요 약

중국 전통 복식 문양은 독특한 예술적 스타일로 인해 세계 패션위크 무대에 자주 등장하고 있다. 문양은 중국 전통문화에서 중요한 구성 요소로서 부단한 변천과 발전 과정을 거쳐 청나라 시대에 절정에 이르렀다. 따라서 본 연구는 현대 패션디자인에 나타난 청나라 복식의 용과 봉황 문양의 미적 특성에 대한 탐색을 목적으로 하였다. 우선 이론적인 배경에서 용과 봉황 문양과 관련한 선행연구들을 살펴보고, 중국 역사의 여러 시기별로 용과 봉황의 문양이 어떻게 변천되었는지 그 특징을 정리하였다. 또한 용과 봉황 문양의 미적 특성을 고찰하여 복식 속에서 표현된 미적 특성을 정리하였으며, 청나라 복식에서 표현된 용과 봉황 문양의 특징을 분석한 다음 현대 패션디자인에서 어떻게 표현되었는지를 분석하였다. 이론적 배경을 기초로 하여 2015 S/S부터 2022 F/W까지 세계 4대 컬렉션에서 발표된 작품들을 패션 전문 사이트 보그에서 검색한 결과, 용과 봉황 문양을 응용한 사례는 181건이 있었으며, 그 중에서 청나라 복식의 용과 봉황 문양을 응용한 사례는 88건으로 나타났다. 현대 패션디자인에서 나타난 청나라 복식의 용과 봉황 문양의 주요 미적 특성으로는 융합미, 현대미, 장식미, 자연미로 요약될 수 있다. 본 연구의 결과를 통해 향후 패션디자인 영역에서 용과 봉황 문양을 활용하는 데 참고 자료를 제공하길 바라며, 더 나아가 현대 디자인에서의 전통 문양의 응용에 대한 다양한 아이디어를 제공할 수 있기를 기대하는 바이다. 또한 본 연구를 통해 중국 전통문화 및 전통적인 용과 봉황 문양의 미적 가치를 더욱 잘 이해하는데 일조할 수 있기를 기대한다.

주제어 : 용과 봉황 문양, 청나라 복식, 현대 패션 디자인, 미적 특성

