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Meditation and Madness. Ancient and Contemporary Speculation on Chinese Bird Totem Art

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Abstract. Philosophy extends from literature to art, religion, history, and archaeology, and tries to pay attention to the philosophical interpretation of ancient Chinese images. This paper highlights the interaction between literature narration and cultural relic image narration and brings methodological enlightenment to philosophical "comparison", starting with the concepts of the Witchcraft and the ecstasy, this paper reinterprets the bird totem image of ancient Chinese civilization and explores the bird worship cosmology and outlook on life hidden in ancient Chinese civilization. This paper emphasizes the role of "comparative" philosophy as important evidence of theoretical interpretation in re contextualizing the literature narration of ancient civilization and the image narration of cultural relics. This is significant because it concludes that prehistoric Chinese humans were good at using the image of birds as the metaphor for their soul of obsessive consciousness. This conclusion will help us understand the psychic artist insisted on giving the bird totem art a strange power to construct ideas, and this idea has been dispensable for contemporary mankind. This will help us better understand the ancient witchcraft artistic consciousness embodied in the prehistoric bird totem. I take it as an example of how the Enlightenment rationality should be reflected and criticized. They are an important force for modern people to return to their mythological origin and save the modern crisis caused by the loss of core cultural values.

Keywords. Ancient and modern, words, Chinese bird totem art, Meditation and Madness, self-consciousness

1. Introduction

In recent years, archaeologists are increasingly interested to interpret the meaning behind the bird totem art. At the same time, this interpretation is also the main challenge faced by many anthropologists.

Recently, Important literature has been developed around the theme of bird totem art. From the perspective of functionalism, many scholars point out that prehistoric bird totem art has the functions of totem worship, fertility worship and witchcraft. Perhaps for ancient humans, totem is a purpose of fear and awe of nature, to better sense the world.

These explanations may not be satisfactory. Because the research on the culture of bird totem worship should not only pay attention to develop its artistic style and connotation, but also pay attention to the human spirit behind the culture of bird totem worship. Specifically, the attention to the history of totem culture should not mechanically reflect the stage of production

and productivity relationship of its artistic works. For example, we only focus on the analysis of the artistic style and form of bird totem, and then make a link with social history and political history, while ignoring the relationship between artistic works and special spirit.

By combining the ideas of Saint Gradi, the founder of fanatics, and Foucault, a modernist philosopher, the author tries to grasp the relationship between deep thinking fanatics and the backward meaning of Chinese prehistoric mythical art. I hope this study will help the audience to understand the relationship between ancient and modern mythical. However, this study cannot cover many ancient and modern bird totem data. Only the most typical bird totem art works are selected, supplemented by relevant modern art works.

This paper aims to reveal its deep philosophical points through the analysis of bird totem symbols of ancient Near Eastern civilization.

2. The bird totem art, p mystical complex

This paper briefly traced the history and current of the study of bird images in prehistoric China and found an interesting and worthy of reflection. On the one hand, in the many birds' totem works of art, we had not seen two the same images. These basic images are rich and colorful, thus forming a wide variety of prehistoric bird images. However, on the other hand, countless bird totem art can be classified into two categories, p pictographic object narration (natural modeling) and abstract pattern image narration (geometric pattern). As shown in the figure (Table 1), p the natural shape is the stork fish stone axe pottery jar and bird painted pottery decoration unearthed from Yangshao culture in the early Neolithic age. Because they mirror the natural appearance of birds; The geometric pattern is a painted pottery curved basin unearthed in Miaodigou of Yangshao culture in prehistoric times. However, there is no clear bird shape on it, which only presents Abstract rotating texture. These two categories become to reproduce the prototype of present-day bird symbols.

The origin of art was first proposed by Aristotle (384-322 BC). He discussed two kinds of artistic origins, p eye reproduction and dominant schema. According to Aristotle, art originates from two basic human impulses, one is imitation, the other is the impulse to create schema or harmony. In the study of Chinese prehistoric bird images, we found two impulses, p (1) the impulse to mirror natural birds; (2) Observe the harmonious impulse of bird shaped flexible rhythm. This is consistent with our previous discovery that most works of art are copies of natural objects, just like later realistic works; A few works create patterns or schemas through ideas, such as abstract paintings. Therefore, the image creation of abstract patterns is not only a technician's behavior, but also an ideological behavior. This attitude is similar to deconstructing traditional realism in modern art.




Surprisingly, this explanation is similar to Boyce's view of "synesthesia". Because his argument is to expand art, that is, to advocate opening the channels of art and mind to integrate multiple sensory views (vision, hearing and feeling), rather than simple visual exploration (natural form). This consciousness is reflected in the abstract image narration.

Indeed, this synaesthesia is beyond our understanding of current science and technology. We must look for possibilities that can be explained and explained outside its field. In the synaesthesia analysis of comprehensive consciousness, the philosopher Rudolph Steiner¹ provided an important opinion, p "Imagination and primitive will behavior (synaesthesia) come together in consciousness. When we have a will for something, we always have a feeling of fusion with the object of will, which makes us an element of all human beings and the change process of the universe itself" (Rudolf Steiner et al. 1994). Now we must face a serious problem, p discovering the mystery of prehistoric bird totem art is an urgent need to solve the wrong

factors pouring into our new spiritual culture.

Therefore, the mystical disappearance behind the bird totem art is the product of the rational discourse of the times. When we return to the academic minds of postmodern scholars on the edge of madness, we can return to religion and its world outlook. Perhaps we can understand the radical mind of birds from the perspective of totem art to correct the rational bias brought by Enlightenment rationality, rationalism, and modernity.

Table 1. Prehistoric bird shaped object narrative and image narrative of abstract patterns (Liao Qun et al. 2000)

Work name	Illustration	Period	Be unearthed	Size	Collection institution
Stork fish stone axe pottery jar(鸛鱼石斧陶缸)		Yangshao culture in the early Neolithic Age(新石器时代前期仰韶文化)	Unknown	It is 47 cm high, 32.7 cm in diameter and 20.1 cm in bottom diameter .	Collected by the National Museum of China.
Bird painted pottery decoration(鸟彩陶纹饰)		Yangshao culture in the early Neolithic Age(新石器时代前期仰韶文化)	Unearthed in Quanhu village, Huaxian County, Shaanxi Province(陕西华县泉护村出土)	Unknown size	Collection institution unknown
Painted pottery curved Basin(彩陶曲盆)		Miaodigou type of Yangshao culture in prehistoric times (4000-5000 BC)	Unknown	Height 13.8 cm, caliber 40 cm	Collected by secler Museum of Archaeology and art, Peking University.

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3. A crazy condeste, p image narration of bird'mask

Ancient Authors Like other works of art based on fairy tales, the Owl Tattooed Sun God is based on a mythical image, that is, the legend of owl, a legend of owl worship³ of the ancient Dongyi people.

In the past 20 years, a new concern has been aroused about motivating the Dongyi people to worship owls. Scholars believed that these motives are related to the needs of witchcraft rituals or people's expectations of the agricultural harvest season then. However, they did not find another mystery - personified Owl God. When looking into this strange sculpture, we will find the pattern features of this work are distinctive (Figure 1), p two round eyes like cute big eyes and sharp mouth. These two details form an interesting contrast. Because this contradictory image, especially the cute big round eyes, has a single cute feeling, which itself gives people a lovely feeling. There is a spiral texture on the top of the sculpture, symbolizing the halo of the sun. Obviously, this shows the eyes of prehistoric craftsmen depended on his "ideas" and gave them ideal artistic forms through ideas. In fact, this sculpture tells us that real art excavates the internal essence through the real appearance, rather than simply copying the appearance.



Figure 1. the owl tattooed Sun God(鸱鸮黥面太阳神), made of copper in the Yin and Shang Dynasties, 19.5cm high. The collection institution is unknown.

Conversely, we would say that this is not a pure animal image? Why did ancient artists bother to carve such exquisite animal image works? In fact, this is not an animal image at all. By comparing the bronze ware jade unearthed in Liangzhu(良渚, names of Chinese sites) culture, it is not difficult to find the owl's mouth and nose have changed from the bird image of Yin Shang Dynasty to the face shape of Liangzhu culture.



Figure 2. Jade trace - God, man and beast facial pattern(玉踪-神人兽面纹), Liangzhu culture period, anti-mountain site in Yuhang, Zhejiang, jade Cong, 8.8 cm high and 6.5 kg heavy, New Museum of Zhejiang Provincial Museum.

Carefully observing these two works, we will not be surprised by people's attention to the "mysterious paradigm" of ancient artists. Because the owl tattooed sun god unearthed in the Yin and Shang dynasties can be traced back to the owl god worshipped by the ancient Dongyi people. More and more researchers regarded the owl tattoo as a compound form of human and animal. Therefore, it does not simply copy an animal, but appears as a combination of human and animal. So, is this unusual image created by ancient artists in ignorance? According to my bold speculation, the image of this anthropomorphic owl may be inspired by the artist's divine induction. In other words, the faces of well-known birds are often made by artists attached to God mania. They may be regarded as the representatives of God, as explained in the dialogue between Socrates (469-399 BC) and Ian.

Socrates believes that "God seizes their ordinary reason and uses them as representatives for poets just as he does for diviners and prophets. It is precisely because he wants to make the

audience know the poet does not speak those precious words in ignorance under the power of evidence, but that God speaks to people by attachment". (Plato et al. 2013)

However, different from Socrates' view of psychic mania, Plato started judging the poet's Irrationality, and then the identity of the representatives of divine mania was hidden after his eldest disciple Aristotle. It was not until Carl Gustav Jung (1875—1961) faced the question of "where is the source of human unconsciousness" that psychic mania was gradually put on the agenda. Let's take a look at the motto of Delphi Temple engraved at entrancing Jung's house, p

Call or not,
The gods are always there,
Life is a miracle,
From the past to the future,
And make time and space full of meaning,
Only remember the totem of distant ancestors,
Holding a god given heart,
Can lead to the divine purpose (Plato et al. 2013).

Here, Jung points out that "archetypal image" is the unconscious "condensate" of our ancestors. For this statement, there is a possible explanation, p he means the ancestors' unconsciousness comes from the gift of God. To put it bluntly, it is an artist gave with soul by God. The existence of creating artistic works is essentially a creative existence of air. Therefore, artistic creation is the product of artists relying on gods. However, it is difficult for most scholars to accept and understand Jung's answer about archetypal image, because Jung's theory with strong mystery is based on "lack of realistic basis and empirical method"(Cheng Jincheng 1998, p32-33). Since the Socratic era, archetypal images have been suppressed by the rational spirit, so it is difficult for them to regain an opportunity to understand history. Therefore, rational technology forces human beings to start from rational capacity and no longer regard the artist's ability to see through the essence of things as a mystery.

After analyzing the artistic forms of Zhuanxu(颛顼, God Man beast facial pattern) and jade trace(玉踪, Ancient jade), we should reinterpret a mysterious symbol deeply rooted in its art to make it have more connotation, rather than limited to a cultural connotation and social practice. Therefore, it is rare and valuable to restore the "prototype image" of the hidden artistic mystery. Just like Socrates and Jung, the founders of mysticism, we need to re understand and explain the truth behind the ancient bird totem art, p "Fanaticism".


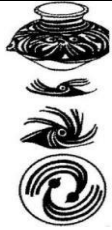
4. A crazy thruth, p image narration of a bird shaped abstract decoration



Samsa, Socrates' obsessive consciousness played a role of subjective initiative in the artistic creation of ancient artists. Because the power of artists' Psychic perception runs through the whole process of artistic creation and calls for new forms with the help of an unknown creation. So, such an artist is a real "psychic". Altieri Rambo (1854-1891), the founder of surrealist poetry, responded well to this psychic, p "The most typical telepathic people are those who can 'observe the invisible, listen to the silent and reveal the spirit of dead "(Altier Rambo et al. 2000). Here is a prehistoric brocade life tree pattern (织锦生命树, the art of Yao nationality in China), which will help us better understand how ancient artists drew arcs and extend it to the mysterious power that makes people dizzy.

The pattern of brocade Life Tree (Table 2, p Figure 1) of Yao nationality in China radiates outward from one center to form a branch shape with rotating significance. In addition, these basic structures are flowing, but the more polished and neater the surface, the more complex the result is. Because what is the energy released by the distorted left and right, and constantly regain something, or to point to the field of vertigo? Michel Foucault's words most fully express to understand to connote nonobjective spiral, p "Something unnatural and disturbing absurdity exists, and all this just gives half man and half beast strange power" (Michelle Foucault et al. 2019, p17). Perhaps the psychic artist insisted on giving the spiral structure a strange power to construct ideas.

However, the experts further pointed out the above two special crosses (Table 2, p Figure 1) are composed of two phoenix birds. The image of this bird can be seen from the phoenix pattern under Shiling of Yangshao culture (仰韶文化石岭, Neolithic archaeological culture) (Table 2, p Figure 2), the butterfly double phoenix pattern of Hemudu culture(河姆渡文化, Neolithic archaeological culture) (Table 2, p Figure 3) and the golden ornament of sun god bird (Table 2, p Figure 4). This phenomenon has been confirmed by a wide range of scholars, p the bottom of bird worship belief contains ancient god worship. Therefore, ancient ancestors believed that birds were divine. In addition, the infatuation with this strange phoenix image confirmed that in the early prehistoric times, people were concerned about the inner divinity of human nature, that is, a temperament (Jung called it the subconscious). However, with the passage of time, to connote bird shape has changed from the meaning of worshipping gods to the meaning of madness or irrationality. For example, the meaning of bird patterns such as the phoenix pattern of the 2008 Beijing Olympic torch relay, the phoenix pattern of Phoenix Satellite TV and the sun bird gold foil decorated on the roof of the hotel lobby is not clear. The author studied the phenomenon based on the Internet and found that more than half of the public could not provide the real cultural connotation of the phoenix pattern in the torch relay of the Beijing Olympic Games.

Table 2. Image Narration of an ancient bird shaped abstract decoration

Work name	Illustration	Form
Brocade Life Tree(织锦生命树) (Table 2, figure 1)(Bao Xiaolong 鲍小龙 2005, p51)		A branch whose central point radiates outward
Fengniao pattern under Shiling of Yangshao culture (仰韶文化)(Table 2, figure 2)(Ge Lin 葛琳. 2008, p58)		Phoenix twining

<p>Double phoenix patterns on butterfly shaped utensils(陶器双凤纹) of Hemudu culture(河姆渡文化) (Table 2, figure 3) (Ge Lin 葛琳. 2008, p58)</p>		<p>Double phoenix butterfly shape</p>
<p>Gold pattern of sun god bird (Table 2, figure 4)(Xiong Ze 熊泽.2011, p53)</p>		<p>Spiral</p>

Bird Why is that? French thinker Michel Foucault pointed out briefly in his book *madness and Civilization*, p

"In the thought of medieval people, the animal world named by Adam symbolically embodies the value of human nature. But in the early Renaissance, the relationship between man and the animal world was reversed. The beast is free. They escape from legends and moral diagrams and obtain some strange nature of themselves. Because of the staggering reversal, animals now track people, catch people, and reveal people's own truth. The unrealistic animals generated from Crazy imagination have become the secret essence of man. When the end comes and sinful human beings appear in ugly nudity, we will see that human beings have the terrible image of some crazy animal "(Michelle Foucault et al. 2019, p17).

Therefore, from the end of the 19th century to today's Chinese society, the bird God deviated from the ancient "value of human symbols"(Michelle Foucault et al. 2019, p10), became an irrational aura in the eyes of the world and a poor laughingstock. The same exists in the West. Since the Middle Ages, this madness has been regarded as a symbol of madness by the Western rational world. Therefore, since the Middle Ages, after the Western rationality reached a certain depth, the mysterious inspiration of bird totem disappeared, which led to question the rationality of obsession. Fortunately, irrationality has always been a decisive in modernist works of art.

We can see in Van Gogh's works that these weak, short-lived irrational flames may burn. Specifically, any work of art contains "magic flavor". There is no doubt that feeling ecstasy is playing an irreplaceable role. I found an interesting phenomenon, p the sky painted by Van Gogh is much like the golden ball of sunbirds. It is said that to capture the lines in the sun, he painted at noon when the sun was the most poisonous, Van Gogh also wrote this sentence for the respected Sun, p "I describe a sun. I want people to feel that it rotates at an amazing speed and emits terrible light waves!"



Figure 3. Van Gogh, starry sky, oil painting material, 1889.

If he could understand the meaning of the Oriental prehistoric bird totem, perhaps he would restate what he said: "When I draw the sun, I hope people think it is to embody the God of crazy birds." It seems the voice of irrational weakness can only be transmitted to those who can understand it, such as Van Gogh. Today, it is better to end this section with Foucault's words, p "The product of human madness is not the disclosure of natural nature, but the restoration of that" (Michelle Foucault et al. 2019, p263).

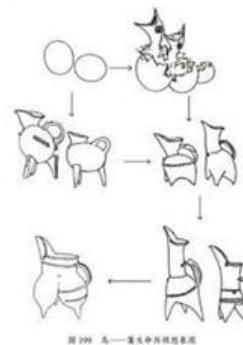
5. The disappearance of ecstasy, p the narration of bird shaped images

This section compares the ancient wine pots recorded by archaeologists in the field research of prehistoric Longshan cultural area with the modern wine pots I collected on the Internet and explains the decline of mania in the contemporary era since ancient times. The web of world spiritual consciousness constructed by profound knowledge is being torn apart, gradually silent, and no longer express or reveal anything. Therefore, the symbol of contemporary birds, freed from the irrationality and mystery that constitute them, began to focus on the worship of matter.

This is enough to answer the two great mysteries of Socrates and Jung from another angle, p one is that only the crazy attached by God is a poet or artist. The second problem is that only holding the Spirit given by God can achieve the divine purpose. What else is there besides mania? Compared with Zhuanxu (颛顼) and jade trace (玉踪), which pursue solemn visual effects and advocate father's love, bird shaped pottery (鸟形陶鬶, A bird shaped artifact) (Fig. 4) seems to show the life-form of birds and convey the warmth of motherhood in both form and material aspects (Fig. 5).



(a)



(b)

Figure4. (a) Van Gogh, starry sky, oil painting material, 1889; (b) Imagination of the life course of birds.

In fact, this bird shaped pottery unearthed from Dawenkou Culture in Shandong Province is not only the earliest ritual vessel in China, but also a complete set of wine making equipment. Although overall, the bird shaped pottery figurines have a likeness with real birds in form. However, compared with the forms of Eagle shaped pottery (Fig. 6) and grey pottery bird shaped pottery (灰陶鸟形器) (Fig. 7), the aesthetic function of this bird shaped pottery is a minimalist technique, especially the shape of bird head is like a simplified geometric figure (Fig. 8). But in fact, it is not a long triangle in the strict sense, but with slight bending. Many other parts of bird shaped pottery are carved with abstract geometric shapes, which increases the vitality and personality of bird shaped pottery.



Figure5. (a) culture of Dawenkou period, Eagle shaped pottery; (b) grey pottery bird shaped purple(灰陶鳥形紫), late prehistoric era, Beizhuang phase I of Dawenkou Culture (4000 BC - 3500 BC), 18 cm high and 18 cm long 23.5 cm. Secler Museum of Archaeology and art, Peking University.



Figure6. (a) Bird shaped cooking utensils in Dawenkou Culture; (b) Bird pattern(鳥紋爵).

From the history of wine culture instruments, the light bird pattern bronze Jue (鸟纹爵青铜爵, A drinking device in the middle of the Western Zhou Dynasty) unearthed in the Xia Dynasty (Fig. 9) can no longer see the trace of bird form. However, in the archaeological map written by LV Dalin of the Northern Song Dynasty, we can get a piece of evidence the shape of the nobility is like that of a bird, p "Today, the nobility shown in the ritual map is all on the back of a bird, and it is said that it is not true. Today's view is an instrument. The front is like a bird, the rear is like a tail, and the foot is sharp. Its whole body is like a bird. Its name is raised day by day, and its quantity can be improved. It can be said that it is a nobility (今礼图所载爵皆于雀背负盞, 经传所不见, 同疑不然。今观是器, 前若喙, 后若尾, 足修而锐, 其全体有象于雀, 其名又日举, 其量有容升者, 则可谓之爵无疑。)" (LV Dalin et al.1987, p109). However, in the contemporary era, the shapes of these widespread wine vessels (Fig. 10)

are no longer the familiar bird like wine vessels with flowing back tail. Except for the bottle mouth with bird shaped pottery head shape (Fig. 11), there is almost no ancient bird like spirit. This shows that contemporary human beings no longer pay attention to the utility of gods and sacrifices but pursue the utility of technology and practicality.



(a)



(b)

Figure7. (a) Porcelain animal wine vessel. (b) traditional simple wine pot

Therefore, this rather contradictory result may be because of the different orientation of belief culture in the two times. The belief in prehistoric bird shaped pottery pointed to the world of God. The discussion on the value and tool orientation of wine vessels is not only a simple imitation of the function of witchcraft, but also turns to the discourse system of contemporary totem wine culture. In fact, wine culture is also a totem. We should know that totem is not limited to the context of prehistoric witchcraft, but also the same concept as the current subconscious discourse system.

However, from the perspective of teleology, totem wine culture is different from the ancient bird totem culture. Because the former is a discourse system of unconscious compulsory obedience to wine culture. This discourse system covers it, so it no longer has close contact with ancient gods and no longer starts from to perceive gods. At first, the latter is only for entering to combine "ecstasy without use", and then "only for the way to return to the divine origin". Mythologist Roland Buffett⁴ believed that we should subvert the current order of discourse power to enable us to obtain to perceive new life. At the same time, he pointed out that as an excellent artist, he should undertake to subvert the stable mechanical image constructed by the current world discourse system. As he said in his book "interpretation of mythology and popular culture", "All a little full break from the ordinary leads to festivals " (Roland Barthes et al. 1999, p2).

Only by the divine nature and the attached state of the soul, we can ancient artists keep the bird culture and traditional witchcraft thinking together, surpass the discourse system of today's world and lead us to explore spirit and spirituality. However, the current bird shaped wine vessels make us lose the sense of being able to see the gods, and no longer have the way of perceiving lifelike the ancient way of perceiving the world. However, we once again see the "irrational" factors in the two works of contemporary artist Milo, the dance of akrobote and the bird in space (Fig. 12 / 13). It is these two paintings that convey the irrationality hidden under the darkness to those who can accept them and restore their original wildness again.



(a)



(b)



Figure8. (a) Miro, akrobote dance, oil painting. (b) Miro, birds in space, oil painting.

Conclusions

From By comparing the forms, meanings and connotations of ancient and modern bird symbols, the driving force driving me to write this paper lies in my judgment of the current in bird symbol vision. In other words, it is the idea of building a bridge between the conceptual world and the bird image world. I think the problem is not that ideas are available to human beings, but that the symbols of various forms and rhythms have been in the structure of the world of aggressive ideas. Reasonably speaking, our current bird symbol (figures 14 and 15) should have the connotation and strength comparable to the prehistoric bird totem. In other words, the depth of contemporary bird symbol itself is an indisputable current.

I may not agree with statement. The so-called symbol of contemporary birds may succumb to the charm of words, which may be a worse for the image of birds. Because they often become a tool to convey a specific language. For example, in the real world, the bird symbol is determined by the logo content, brand banner, media visual image, semi text communication tools of web pages and games that we are often exposed to. Therefore, it is more important to restore the concept of the visual nature of prehistoric bird totem and preserve its general inspiration. When I review the ancient witchcraft artistic consciousness embodied in the prehistoric bird totem, I take it as an example of how the Enlightenment rationality should be reflected and criticized. They are an important force for modern people to return to their mythological origin and save the modern crisis caused by the loss of core cultural values.

I think the prehistoric bird totem is a fable about how birds became a symbol of ecstasy. As incarnating God, the bird is to express the original theology.



(a)



(b)

Figure9. (a) Green clouds series by Guo Zan, 2021. (b) The creator is unknown. Tianniao to bird ceramic ornaments, the year is unknown.

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Author contribution

Professor Zhilong Yan's and Dr. Aixin Zhang's contribution, p
Make important contributions to the concept or design of the subject, data acquisition, analysis, or interpretation
Write work, or make key modifications to important knowledge content
Approve final release
Agree to be responsible for all aspects of the work and ensure that issues related to the accuracy and integrity of any part of the work are properly investigated and resolved.

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