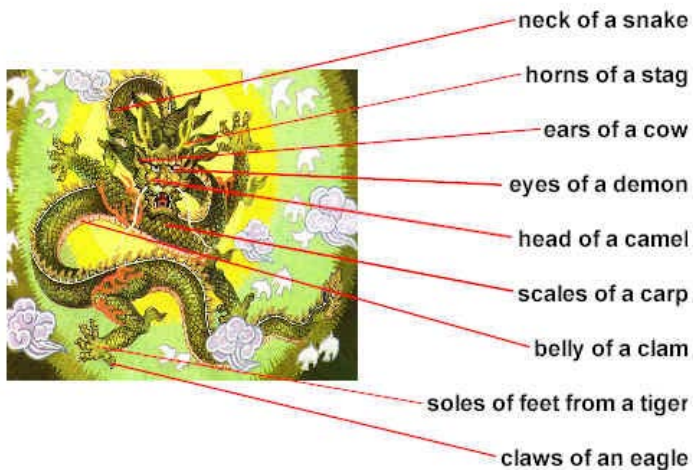


# Oriental Dragons

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Oriental dragons are associated with water. They live underwater and in burrows inside of mountains. Some oriental dragons are born as fish. Oriental dragons spit water out of their mouths and are good, unlike their western counterparts, which are evil and breathe fire. They enjoy eating roasted swallows. They are nocturnal, so they only come out at night. Oriental dragons mate with Phoenix because all oriental dragons are male. Phoenix are the preferred mate of dragons, because in Chinese culture dragons represent Yin, the male side of the Yin-yang, and Phoenix represent Yang, the female side. They represent power and excellence, valor, boldness, heroism, perseverance, nobility and divinity. Dragons also represent sin in the Christian

religion, and evil and destruction in old legends.

According to legend, the Chinese dragon has 117 scales. Of those, 81 are infused with goodness (*yang*), while 36 of the scales are infused with badness (*yin*). Therefore the Chinese dragon is mostly good, or benign. But the 36 scales allow the Chinese dragon to also be bad, or malevolent. Even the dragon's voice is not completely good or completely evil. Its voice is like the jingling of copper pans, neither smooth and sweet sounding nor jarring and unpleasant.

The primary goodness of Chinese dragons set them apart from the fierce Western dragons. Besides being a mostly beneficent (doing good) creature, Chinese dragons differ from Western dragons in several other ways:

- 1) they spend 3,000 years in metamorphosis;
- 2) they are usually wingless (because most of their life is spent in the wingless stages of metamorphosis);
- 3) they do not breathe fire;
- 4) they can change size at will;
- 5) they can shape shift or turn into any form, including human form; they become invisible by becoming smaller.