

Ethnic Cultural Identity in Mythology



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SUMMARY: Folk literature aims to express and record knowledge, experiences, thoughts, and feelings about social life, nature, and the universe. Therefore, folk literature is national, and any nation's folk literature has a strong cultural identity of that nation. This article studies cultural identity in folk literature and demonstrates which ethnic folk literature is rich in that national identity through the mythological genre.

KEYWORDS: Folk culture, National identity, culture, nation, mythology.

I. PREAMBLE

Folk literature is not only a literary phenomenon but also a cultural phenomenon. It reflects many different aspects of material and spiritual life in society: reflects aesthetic functions, history, customs, traditions, religion... at the same time summarizing the knowledge of People belonging to many different fields of natural science and social science in a form that is not yet clearly divided. Therefore, folk literature helps future generations realize the rich history, cultural traditions, character, and spiritual beauty of their people.

Myths are folk tales about gods, heroes, and cultural creators, aiming to reflect and explain natural and social phenomena according to the concept that all things have human souls. ancient. In this article, we only study the national identity aspect in mythology.

II. CONTENT

2.1. Cultural identity in folk literature

What is cultural identity? It is the totality of typical values of the national culture, formed, existing and developed throughout the country's long history, with typical values that are sustainable, lasting, and abstract. imaginary and potential. Therefore, to recognize it, we must go through countless cultural nuances, as an expression of that cultural identity.

In terms of content, folk literature reflects the social and moral concepts of working people and ethnic groups. In addition, it also provides useful knowledge about nature and society, making an important contribution to the formation of human personality. It preserves and promotes the good traditions of the nation such as: patriotic tradition, optimism, love of life, spirit of goodness, respect for humanity, rich in love ...

2.2. Mythology is rich in national culture

2.2.1. Source

In Vietnam, myths appeared quite early, "born from the natural philosophy of human life, created during the period when clans and tribes soon had a sense of their place of residence and their consciousness. racial awareness". Mythology "arose from the lives of primitive people and developed according to the requirements of Lac Viet society". In Vietnam, myths appeared quite early, "born from the natural philosophy of human life, created during the period when clans and tribes soon had a sense of their place of residence and their consciousness. awareness of race" [3]. Vietnamese mythology dates back to BC, before the Northern colonial period and during the process of human and social development, mythology has changed more or less in form and plot content. Vietnamese myths no longer retain the same integrity as when they were first composed.

Mythology reflects human dreams through stories and symbols. Mythical gods and heroes often represent human desires and dreams, such as the desire for power, love, eternal existence, or exploration of the natural environment. Myths can provide a way for people to express and tell about their dreams and ambitions through profound stories and symbols. By their extraordinary acts of creating nature, the giant gods are the embodiment of the ancient people's dream of conquering and improving nature in the early days of history.

Vietnamese mythology is the name that collectively refers to mythological stories composed by ancient Vietnamese people [11]. The country of Vietnam has 54 ethnic groups, so each ethnic group has its own mythology such as Vietnamese (Kinh) ethnic mythology, Muong ethnic mythology, Tay ethnic mythology, Thai ethnic mythology, etc. Ede national mythology, Central Highland

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national mythology... leads to the fact that in Vietnamese mythology there are many stories written about the same god or explaining the same phenomenon, but the way of explaining and naming the characters is different. However, that difference is not significant because the content of the stories is still the same, with only a few small details different.

Due to historical and social circumstances, due to oral transmission and not being recorded, a lot of Vietnamese mythology has been lost. However, literary researchers have tried to collect and gather them. Although Vietnamese mythology is not a huge treasure trove of myths, Vietnamese mythology is still a valuable source of documents for all social sciences, reflecting a certain part of the living situation. ancient Vietnamese society and is an endless source of inspiration for other Vietnamese art forms such as painting, literary composition...

2.2.2. Content of Vietnamese mythology bold national culture : culture of worshipping gods

Reflecting the concept and perception of the world of the Việt Cổ:

Because they did not have enough conditions to perceive nature and the universe correctly, completely and accurately, the ancient Vietnamese people as well as other peoples around the world, during their childhood, worshiped nature. , considers nature as a supernatural force in which the divine world exists, governs and controls everything (Sky Pillar God, Rain God, Wind God...). In essence, the gods are phenomena, real forces in the natural world that are unconsciously deified according to the concept of primitive people.

The struggle to conquer nature and create culture, expressing human aspirations: In many cases, mythological gods and heroes are portrayed as people capable of overcoming challenges and duels with natural elements such as raging seas, natural disasters, or natural monsters. The conquest of nature is often an important part of the story in mythology and can demonstrate human courage and determination in dominating and adapting to harsh natural environments. Unlike their limited understanding, the ancient people's desire to conquer nature was very great, very intense and daring. Even though their awareness of nature is still sketchy, their explanations are simple and there are many mistakes, at least we can realize that ancient people were very interested in nature with many desires, concerns, and worries. Questions need to be cleared. Their rich but unconscious imagination helped them do that in a miraculous way. A mythical world created in the sincere and absolute belief of ancient people. And in a way, the process of reaching out to understand nature - an object that directly and continuously impacts their survival - is also the process of struggling to conquer nature and then creating new things. create culture. Therefore, what is reflected as objective reality is still blurred, but people's subjective aspirations and dreams are very real and very clear.

The central characters of mythology are always the gods. In primitive societies, people were threatened by natural forces. People are afraid of natural phenomena that always threaten them because they do not have a scientific basis to explain natural phenomena, which has led to a situation where people worship those natural forces. Therefore, god is considered a natural or supernatural entity, considered sacred and powerful by people. Gods are also considered immortal, intellectual, and more sublime than humans. God is responsible for performing a certain function. And to perform that function well, the gods have weapons and animals to support their power. The gods also have personalities like humans. They know how to love, hate, be angry, jealous... In their relationships with humans, gods in Vietnamese mythology show their immense love for humans and reciprocate those feelings of gods and children. People also respect the gods very much. But on the contrary, God is the supreme being, so if humans dare to disrespect God, God will punish them without mercy

In Vietnamese myths, the living and governing space of the gods is also divided into four worlds: underground, underwater, ground, sky, and there are gods who hold big and small positions to govern. Heaven, also known as the Jade Emperor, is the supreme deity, governing both the sky and the human world. In addition, to assist the Jade Emperor in governing the world, there are many gods

For example: The story "Lúa Thần" reflects the dream of wet rice farmers, wanting to have a "magic rice" variety that produces extraordinary yields and automatically crawls home when ripe, saving the grower the hard work. Extraordinary yet simple, magical yet innocent, these are common characteristics of the expression of human dreams and imagination in mythology.

Mythology Thần Trụ Trời: Expressing beliefs: Ancient God worship of agricultural residents:

This is a form of primitive belief of people who cannot explain natural phenomena, so they think that every thing and phenomenon around them is controlled by gods, gradually forming beliefs. worship nature. They imagine that the original form of existence of the universe was a mass of matter called chaos, then thanks to the appearance of a god, heaven and earth were separated from each other, and the universe was formed from there. ...

The work explains that since the appearance of a giant god, that mass of chaos was separated into heaven and earth. The taller this god grows, the farther heaven and earth will be. After that, God dug up rocks and soil to build pillars supporting the sky, creating lakes, rivers, and seas. When he believed that the sky could not fall, he destroyed that giant pillar supporting the sky, causing rocks and soil to fly out. everywhere form hills and mountains. According to mythological explanations, the gods cannot use miracles to create the universe but must use their own labor: to support the sky, the gods must dig up rocks and soil to build pillars or must use their shoulders. In order to make heaven and earth wide and long or fit together, the gods must use their hands to stretch or massage. Human explanations rely on spiritual and magical elements to decode phenomena around life. The Sky Pillar God explains the process of creating the world, heaven and earth, and all things under the hands of the Heaven Pillar God and other gods. This is a myth that explains the origin of the universe and natural things from a folk perspective.

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People's aspirations through stories : Explaining the origin of phenomena . Encourage the productive working spirit of Vietnamese farmers

Mythology: Nữ thần Mặt Trời và Mặt trăng

Expressing beliefs: Worshipping the gods. Details related to beliefs: The Sun and Moon Goddesses are sisters, children of Heaven. The work assigned by God every day must take turns examining the world creating day and night. The life phenomena of full moon, waning moon, low moon, and high moon are also better understood through the story. It depends on the personality of the Moon woman. Maybe when we happily go down to earth, we will be able to see the full moon, but when we turn our backs, the moon will be much thinner.

Through stories it helps explain the world around us, about human origins, about natural phenomena in daily life and the things surrounding our lives. At the same time, mythological stories also help the younger generation understand how in the early wild world, people imagined the universe and the world.

3. CONCLUDE

Every nation is proud of its country's mythological treasure because it contains thousands of years of national culture. The gods are all built to have human-like personalities, have certain functions, and have magical objects next to them. Vietnamese mythology shows a close connection with religion. Mythology is not simply a means of expressing the worldview and outlook on the life of the ancients but is also a way to convey specific religious values and encourage respect and veneration for myths. religious body. The outlook on life in Vietnamese folk literature often shows the powerful aspect of gods and mascots in human life. Through honoring and respecting gods and mascots, Vietnamese people wish to have peace, luck, and happiness in daily life.

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