

Analysis of the Differences and Causes of Chinese and Japanese Creation Myths

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Abstract

The so-called myth refers to a collection of stories that record and compile the historical footprint of a nation from the ancient times to the civilized era. In the long historical process, ancestors formed their own unique worldview, which was passed down from generation to generation in the form of mythology. Judging from the remaining data, most countries and nations in the world have creation myths that contain their own civilization. Describing the origin of all nature is one of the greatest characteristics of the creation myth, which has profound cultural connotations in a true sense. Many nations have unique creation epics directly derived from ancient creation myths, and these creation epics themselves are symbols of the fine national cultures of various countries. This article aims to study the cultural connotation and national characteristics of China and Japan by analyzing the creation myths of the nations of China and Japan.

Keywords

China and Japan, creation myth, cultural connotation.

1. Introduction

Myths and legends embodied the national cultural spirit and promoted the formation of the characteristics of the nation in later generations. Folk rumors, like myths, are valuable spiritual and cultural assets of all nations, and have a considerable position in the history of literature. Based on the protagonists of various myths and the theme of the story, the artists used their free and rich imagination to form relevant literary creations in various eras, leading future generations of artists to different ways of visualizing natural objects and subsequent things, including but not limited to Novels, paintings, film and television, etc. Mythology has a great influence on the literature, philosophy, religion, and ethnic habits of a country and ethnic region. This influence has long been rooted in the consciousness and psychology of the nation. As neighbors, China and Japan are similar in all respects. The author aims to learn about the unique cultural concepts of the two countries and compare the different national spirits of the two countries through the study of the creation myth in this article.

2. The definition of the creation myth

The creation myth is a naive interpretation and description of nature and the universe in the form of fantasy in the early days of mankind, reflecting the primitive ancient people's primitive concept of the universe and the origin of mankind. We can understand a nation by interpreting myths. Because mythology is a unique metaphor, its meaning is particularly ambiguous and difficult to synonymize. If it can be simply unified, the myth has the essence that can be said to be more than just the myth.

The creation myth records the origins of all things, including not only the development of heaven and earth, the origin of human beings, the birth of nations, etc., but also astronomy, geography, and the Sifang museums. It mainly shows people's pursuit of the development and change of all things in the world and the integrity of their own sources. The myths of people

such as Pangu opening the world, Nuwa creating people, Houyi shooting the sun, and Dayu's water control, are all the creation myths of the Chinese nation. Creating the universe and nature, creating human beings, creating artifacts, creating systems, and creating moral ethics are the core content of the Chinese creation myth.

3. The Chinese and Japanese national characteristics and spirit reflected in the creation myth

3.1. Chinese national characteristics and spirit

China's ethnic minorities also have many creation myths. For example, a myth of the Bai people, which is similar to the Pangu mythology, tells that the giant Mu Shiwei, various organs on the body, respectively changed into all natural things and created the world. It can be seen from this that all creation myths reflect the positive spirit of the original ancestors and express their feelings for all things in nature. Primitive ancestors considered everything in nature as beings like human beings. However, because of the very low production and living ability, they were helpless in the face of natural disasters. Therefore, the ancestors radiated their thoughts, fantasizing that they had the ability to conquer and transform nature.

In the fantasy of the primitive people, everything in nature has its own image. Some images are human partners, and some are human enemies. They not only have life, but also emotions and thoughts. It can be said that they are no different from humans. From the fairy tales, we can glimpse the essential characteristics and the aesthetic preferences and thinking styles of the ancestors. The creation myth has integrated various ideologies of the ancestors. It may not be very mature, but it shows the original form of human exploration of the world and life.

Human beings not only have a common ancestor, each tribe also has their own ancestor myth. For example, in the "Book of Songs·Daya·Shengmin", there is a description of the myth of Hou Ji, the first ancestor of the Zhou nation: A woman named Jiang Chang accidentally stepped on the mark of the emperor's toe and became pregnant, and then Ji was born. But Jiang Chang thought that Ji was an ominous existence, so he abandoned him in various places with no people and harsh environment. Unexpectedly, Ji was rescued by other creatures and survived successfully. He also showed the talent for planting crops, and finally became the first distant ancestor of Zhou's family. Myths of this type exist in almost all tribes, and some have similar places, which show the tribal people's remembrance and remembrance of their ancestors and reflect people's national pride.

3.2. Japanese national characteristics and spirit

In Japan, there are not only myths and legends of natural obedience, but also types of natural reshaping. For example, the myth of the extinction of Yamada Dairo, which is a variant of the myth of the flood type. But these are not the mainstream of the Japanese mythology system. It can be said that Japan has a view of reshaping nature, but the overall thought and view is still respecting nature.

In addition, I should also mention Japanese Bushido [It originated in the Kamakura shogunate in Japan, and was formed by absorbing Confucian and Buddhist ideas during the Edo period.]. As we all know, cutting the belly is a well-known behavior in Bushido, and the spirit of Bushido is the spiritual pillar of the samurai class in Japan's feudal society. At first, Bushido advocated five points of "loyalty and integrity". However, as a product of the shogunate politics in the feudal era, it drew a lot of the superficial content of the two religions of Confucianism and Buddhism. Some ideas in Confucianism and Buddhism that are quite different from the Bushido spirit were replaced by Shintoism inherent in the Japanese nation. Considering the development of the Bushido spirit, character paranoia is also one of the national characteristics of the Yamato nation.

From ancient times to the present, the samurai sword and bow are the symbols of the brave and fearless spirit and identity of the warriors. Especially "Bushido is the awareness of death." When this inattentive view of death is combined with insufficiently open-minded nationalism and certain policy viewpoints, it will begin to ignore the value of oneself and others' lives, and become torture and self-abuse. Enthusiasts. Especially in many historical records and creative stories, many warriors committed suicide in order to apologize for failing to complete the orders issued by their superiors. Such behavior makes us have to think deeply about why tasks are more important than life. But on the other hand, this shows that the Japanese people have a high degree of obedience to orders, and they rarely make excuses after the mission fails, and they use their blood to learn their minds. This kind of thinking is narrow.

Judging from the creation myth described in the Japanese "Kojiki", whether it is the story of the male god having to speak before the union can give birth to a normal child or the story of the goddess being injured and becoming ugly and being disgusted by the male god, it shows the national characteristics. It is also very different from that of the Chinese nation. Although the goddess Izanami is one of the creation gods, but the status is not as good as the male god Izanaki. In modern times, Japanese women become full-time housewives after they get married. The background of Nuwa's creation is a matrilineal society where women occupy a dominant position, which reflects the respect for women and the recognition of women's status.

Ancient myths can reflect the most primitive and basic way of thinking and lifestyle of a nation. ...Chinese mythological works are majestic, while Japanese ones are melancholy and delicate; Chinese art is magnificent, while Japan is small and exquisite, which is consistent with the concept of mythology.

4. Reasons for the differences between Chinese and Japanese creation myths

4.1. Differences in natural geographical conditions

(1) China's natural geographical conditions

China has fertile land and long-standing river basins. The terrain is relatively complex, plateaus, mountains and hills occupy a relatively large area, and the natural history of development is relatively unique and rich in resources. The original good environment can bring a rich and satisfying life, but the instability of nature has brought a series of natural disasters, such as droughts and floods, high temperatures, cold waves and so on. In addition, tribal people often have wars to grab resources for their own tribe to have better resources and development, so the living environment of the primitive ancestors is relatively harsh. The ancestors had to fight not only with nature, but also with other tribes. It can be seen that the birth of the "hero" myth is not surprising.

The representative of the heroic myth, Kuafu Dashen, is considered by some scholars to be a historical figure that appeared in the ancient Chinese nation. Such mythological stories in China reflect the struggle between ancestors and nature. For example, "Hou Yi shoots the sun" expresses that the ancestors relied on their own strong will and strength to overcome natural disasters. "Kuafu chases the sun" and "Jingwei reclaims the sea" reflects that the ancestors wanted to overcome but there was no way at that time. Strong desire and determination to overcome natural phenomena. Fighting will become the solution chosen by the ancestors because in these myths, people and nature are completely opposite sides.

(2) Japan's natural geographical conditions

In ancient times, Nara, Kyoto, Kyushu and other places had high average temperatures. There was no snow on the mountains, and the coasts would not be frozen. Japanese ancestors lived in the southwest for a whole year without worrying about the source of fresh food. Japanese

ancestors have lived in this environment for generations. Naturally, they are grateful to nature, and of course they don't have to fight against nature. There are not many works with related themes in Japanese literary creation.

On the other hand, Japan's natural world is complicated in time and space, which brings infinite benefits to its residents. At the same time, they rule them with irresistible force. Therefore, they are affected by this natural world. Constraints. He learned to fully enjoy this benefit, and this special attitude towards nature has had a special impact on Japan's physical and mental life. Therefore, in the thinking of ancient Japanese people, there is a view of nature in which the well-being of mankind and nature coexist. The well-being of nature is born and grown in the natural world and returns to nature. Under the influence of philosophy in his later years, mankind does not rule nature, but follows nature and its natural principles, denies human actions, and values nature.

For example, traditional Japanese houses are made of natural materials such as wood and straw. Japan is a country with lush vegetation. There may be various reasons. The most root reason should be what Pursey Massabou said, "In Japan, the simplicity and poverty of building forms and building materials are essential conditions for beauty. one". In other words, Japanese people who advocate "human beings are part of nature" have a value orientation of respecting and living in harmony with nature. Therefore, in the eyes of the Japanese, humans and nature live in harmony.

4.2. Different historical background

The Chinese creation myth has a style bias of respect, obedience, creation, and beautification of authority as a god, showing the supreme and virtuous way of thinking. For example, the two gods of the Three Emperors, Nuwa and Fuxi, are revered as the humanistic ancestors of the Chinese nation. In some historical records, Fuxi is also portrayed as a creator god who can invent and create.

The ethnic minorities in China believe that humans have souls, and nature also have souls. They worship nature and believe in "animism in all things". They believe that all phenomena in the world are related to the soul. When a person is ill or encounters a disaster, it is because the soul or ghost is in trouble. At this time, it is necessary to kill livestock to sacrifice the ghost. These reflect the feed-back characteristics of traditional Chinese thinking.

The official history of Japan began with the accession of the first Emperor Jimmu, and it has been about 2,600 years since the first year of the Japanese era. Japan's creation myths were roughly born in the ancient times of the Jindai period (the long period before Emperor Jimmu ascended the throne). At that time, there were no words, only dictation was passed down. Japanese mythology is mainly preserved in the literary work "Kojiki". At that time, it happened to be the development period of the strengthening of the Japanese feudal system. The establishment of the emperor and the stability of the imperial power were urgent tasks. Under this situation, there was a certain goal. After compilation and collation, the form of Japanese mythology began to have a complete systematization. Documentary records.

Mythology became the carrier of Japanese Shinto, and Shinto provided the soil for mythology to grow. Shinto and the emperor's worship echoed each other, which directly affected the ideology of Japanese people in Japanese history. Even for modern Japanese, we can still be in Japan. The source of their faith is found in the myth.

5. Conclusion

Through the above comparison of the creation myths between China and Japan, it can be seen that the myths are the products of the conquering nature created by the ancestors using their rich imagination, and the myths of various tribes have some similar themes. And because of the

different conditions and backgrounds of the nation and the methods of narration and retention, there are still relatively big differences.

China and Japan are neighbors to each other. There are similarities and differences in the myths and stories. After the baptism of history, they have developed into what everyone now knows. In the long river of history, due to various aspects such as nature, geography, history, etc., stories with national characteristics of the country have been formed.

Through the creation of heroes, the Chinese creation myth expresses the view that it can rely on unyielding willpower to achieve the goal of conquering and changing nature, and embodies the notion that things are man-made. These folk ancestors praised and spread the myths for generations, not only praised the spiritual characteristics of Chinese ancestors and the natural confrontation, but also condensed the excellent spiritual qualities of the Chinese nation, and thus obtained indelible value. Japanese creation mythology shows the difference in status between the two sexes by telling the story of two gods and two gods; through the description of nature and derived stories, it reflects the situation of Japanese people relying on nature and coexisting in harmony with nature.

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