



A COMPARATIVE EVALUATION OF THE NARRATIVE THOUGHTS IN CHINESE AND WESTERN CLASSICAL LITERATURE

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Abstract: The narrative thinking in Chinese literature has an undeniable value and has a certain inspiration for the study of character studies. This article aimed to compare narrative ideas from the perspective of Chinese and Western literature. This article explored China's two different temporal and spatial characteristics and of the West, one by one, and summarized the commonalities and differences of narrative thinking and methods of time and space through the analysis of different regions, different literature, different religions and different philosophical factors. This article explored the author's concepts, narrative thinking, and narrative strategies in Chinese and Western narrative thoughts. Through research, people can discover the laws of narrative behavior in different literature and deepen general understanding of novels. Focusing on "characters" can not only deepen the understanding of the differences between the two narrative methods in China and the West, but also compare these methods to better understand and compare the similarities and differences between Chinese and Western narrative methods, thereby better promoting the overall development of character theory. This article explored the narrative thinking of Chinese and Western classical literature and grasped literary characteristics, which would enhance the vitality of traditional Chinese narrative creation and play a positive role in promoting the development of human narrative thinking in a diversified theoretical context.


Keywords: Chinese and Western narrative thought. Ideological comparison. Culture and literature. Narrative behavior.

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Resumo: O pensamento narrativo, na literatura chinesa, tem um valor indiscutível e agrega uma certa inspiração à análise que estuda as naturezas. Este artigo tem, como finalidade, comparar as ideias narrativas sob a perspectiva das literaturas chinesa e ocidental. As características temporais e espaciais distintas da China e do Ocidente foram estudadas, uma por uma, e as semelhanças e diferenças, entre o pensamento narrativo e os métodos de tempo e espaço, foram resumidas ao se analisar as diferentes regiões, literaturas, religiões e fatores filosóficos. Este texto analisou os conceitos, os pensamentos narrativos e as estratégias de narração, empregadas pelo autor, nas literaturas chinesa e ocidental. Por meio dessa análise, é possível descobrir os padrões de comportamento narrativo das diferentes literaturas, que aprofundam a compreensão geral de romances. Focar nos "indivíduos" permite compreender profundamente as diferenças dos métodos narrativos entre a China e o Ocidente, além de ser possível compará-los para entender melhor as semelhanças e diferenças entre eles, promovendo, assim, um melhor desenvolvimento geral da teoria do indivíduo. Este artigo explorou o pensamento narrativo das literaturas clássicas chinesa e ocidental, e agregou as características literárias, destacando a vitalidade da criação narrativa tradicional chinesa e desempenhando um papel positivo no desenvolvimento do pensamento narrativo humano, em um contexto teórico diversificado.

Palavras-chave: Pensamento Narrativo Chinês e Ocidental. Comparação Ideológica. Cultura e Literatura. Comportamento Narrativo.

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A COMPARATIVE EVALUATION OF THE NARRATIVE THOUGHTS IN CHINESE AND WESTERN CLASSICAL LITERATURE

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Abstract: The narrative thinking in Chinese literature has an undeniable value and has a certain inspiration for the study of character studies. This article aimed to compare narrative ideas from the perspective of Chinese and Western literature. This article explored China's two different temporal and spatial characteristics and of the West, one by one, and summarized the commonalities and differences of narrative thinking and methods of time and space through the analysis of different regions, different literature, different religions and different philosophical factors. This article explored the author's concepts, narrative thinking, and narrative strategies in Chinese and Western narrative thoughts. Through research, people can discover the laws of narrative behavior in different literature and deepen general understanding of novels. Focusing on "characters" can not only deepen the understanding of the differences between the two narrative methods in China and the West, but also compare these methods to better understand and compare the similarities and differences between Chinese and Western narrative methods, thereby better promoting the overall development of character theory. This article explored the narrative thinking of Chinese and Western classical literature and grasped literary characteristics, which would enhance the vitality of traditional Chinese narrative creation and play a positive role in promoting the development of human narrative thinking in a diversified theoretical context.

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INTRODUCTION

Based on the comparison between Chinese and Western narrative methods, this article focuses on the key word "character" and explores the character from a macro perspective. This is of great significance for further understanding and grasping the essence of Western narrative thinking. Since 2000, the Western narrative tradition has a long history, and its theory and practice have also yielded rich results. After the 19th century, Chinese narrative research was inspired by Western narrative theories. In the context of globalization, the word "comparison" in literature has become an inevitable trend in the study of differences. A comparison of the concept of "character" between China and the West helps to better grasp its essence and draw useful results. Western literature may place more emphasis on the growth and evolution of individual personalities, while Chinese literature may focus more on the changes in characters under family and social pressure. Comparing the narrative ideas of Chinese and Western classical literature is of great significance for literary research and

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cross-cultural understanding. Revealing narrative methods and strategies, in different cultural backgrounds, helps deepen people's understanding of Chinese and Western literature, and plays a positive role in promoting the development of human narrative thinking in a diverse theoretical context.

The study of the author's view in traditional Chinese and Western narrative theories is multifaceted. Western narrative ideas seem to have become a "standard" to be emulated by groups, while the potential of local narrative is underestimated. Based on the philosophical foundation of post structuralist research, qualitative methods, "discourse analysis" research methods and "rational reasoning" are used. While defining the concept and historical lineage of narrative mechanisms, it is possible to describe the factors that affect spatial narrative understanding, including the "dialectics of time and space" and its relationship with the "body" role, as well as the human beings' specific existence in any architectural space. Narration, based on the proportion of the human body to architectural space, physical proportion and human visual perception, provides a position. With the help of design tools, it is possible to transcend time and space, directly or metaphorically transforming its narrative into a spatial means for the current audience (Akbari, 2019, p. 75). All mankind's global collective experience has identifiable beginnings, shared visions and shared destinies. However, this spatiotemporal framework assumes that knowledge and experience are not actually shared. Even critical contacts with the Anthropocene often refer to world-wide spatiotemporal references when seeking intervention or calling for action (Amoureux; Varun, 2021, p. 929). This article places the emphasis of narratology on time and space in the rise of the discipline of geography and the rise of materialism and scientific orientation in American institutions after World War II. Ultimately, it believes that a new geographical narratology should pursue a broad range of knowledge of the origins of geography. Geographic narratology explores how geography and space play a crucial role in narrative, as well as how geographic space is constructed and presented through narrative. The extensive knowledge of geographical origins means that researchers, in the field of geography, should possess a wide range of geographical knowledge, including various geographical features, phenomena, theories and history on Earth. Classical narratology emphasizes the logical category, and the persistent spatiotemporal paradigm of narratology conceals the constructive reality of the relationship between humans and physical locations and reader processes (Easterlin, 2018, p. 197). This paper aims to analyze the writers' thoughts, which are conducted against the backdrop of two literary traditions in China and the West. It is necessary to provide a starting point to better demonstrate the similarities and differences between the Chinese and Western writers' thoughts, as well as the different literary backgrounds they contain. Chinese and Western literatures respectively refer to Chinese and European literatures, with traditional Chinese literature from the 17th to the 19th century and traditional Western literature from the 19th century.

Although many achievements have been made in the research of Chinese narratology to this day, there is still a problem that scholars often have some deviations in their understanding and application of Western concepts and terminology. Since the publication of “Corporal Black and Corporal”, ecological criticism has been increasing, especially in its relationship with narrative. An important reason for this growth is the interest of ecological criticism in narrative forms. Traditionally, ecological criticism places narrative content above its form, and more and more scholars are interested in the intersection of literature and the environment, so they are increasingly involved in the concepts and vocabulary of narratology or narrative theory. James also pointed out rich new directions for ecological criticism and narratology research (James; Eric, 2018, p. 355). He studied the field of Chinese literature, in the context of Chinese and Indian cultural diplomacy, in the socialist context, using “dialogue” as a simple metaphor for transnationalism, and making clear the literary connections that impede the logic and goals of cultural diplomacy. As a case study, poet Dinkar’s travel notes documented his visit to China in 1957 (Mangalagiri, 2019, p. 508). He proposed several overlapping propositions on how to conceptualize novels in the dense historical time. Firstly, fictional and secular ideologies are intertwined. In the West, there is a long tradition of distinguishing and deriving fiction from the categories of bad beliefs. Within the framework of secular propositions, he attempted to theorize fiction through hermeneutics and comparison. For this reason, these arguments are related to an important trend in medieval research, which can be said to be an anachronistic academic trend (Orlemanski, 2019, p. 145). The ultimate goal of comparing the Chinese and Western narrative writers’ viewpoints is to give importance to the excellent tradition of Chinese narrative while absorbing and breaking through the layers of fog in Western narrative theory. Obviously, their research still needs to be further deepened. People can discover the general patterns of narrative behavior in different literary works, deepening their overall understanding of novels. Alex Voloch’s recent research emphasized the relationship between primary and secondary characters, proposing new perspectives that are very enlightening for understanding the characters’ dynamics in novels. In addition, Franco Moretti’s research explored the characters’ evolution and comparison in literary works, while Thomas Pavel’s work emphasized the importance of symbols in narrative. These scholars’ research results provide a deeper understanding and help to analyze the narrative differences in Chinese and Western literatures.

The analysis of characters, in this article, provides a general description of characteristics with a tendency to scale on a large scale. Therefore, it cannot simultaneously take into account the special phenomena that exist in Chinese and Western narratives. To address this phenomenon, different literary works from China and the West, especially those involving character portrayal, are compared to emphasize how their respective cultures and narrative traditions influence character analysis. Therefore, this article does not discuss individually, but attempts to summarize the common rules of narrative thinking in China

and the West. However, it is also necessary to sort out the overall structure of the Chinese and Western narrative thinking systems as a whole. From the existing literature, there is still little discussion on the entire concept of characters. Specific role analysis is essential, but grasping the evolution of role concepts, as a whole, can make up for the lack of role thought history and it is also an innovation in deepening the understanding of general roles.

1 COMPARISON OF NARRATIVE METHODS IN CHINESE AND WESTERN CLASSICAL LITERATURE

1.1 THE NARRATIVE ART OF CHINESE CLASSICAL LITERATURE

The concept of time and space is not formed in people's minds from the beginning, but gradually formed in their continuous production and life practice. Similarly, in the early days of classical Chinese literature, writers did not deliberately use the concept of time and space to create. However, with the emergence and development of literature, they gradually realized the importance of time and space, and began to consciously use specific artistic techniques of time and space in the process of literary creation. The common form of address, used by Chinese people, is to use kinship terms to address non-relatives. This phenomenon is sometimes described as "generalization of kinship terms", and it is limited to certain Chinese literary works, where appellations are relatively widespread in Western literature (Ren; Chen, 2019, p. 613).

In causal thinking, a character's behavior is usually driven by clear motivations and reasons, which are closely related to the progress of the plot. Readers or viewers can track the logic of character behavior. Causal thinking emphasizes the causal relationship between events and behaviors. In narrative, this means emphasizing the causal chain in the story, the causal connections of events and how the character's behavior leads to the development of the plot. This way of thinking usually leads to a linear and logically rigorous narrative structure. Related thinking may not emphasize causal relationships as much, but rather focus on the correlation and mutual influence between events and elements. In narrative, this can lead to more complex and non-linear structures, where the connections among events may become more blurred.

(1) The formation of the concept of time and space in ancient China

It can be said that the concept of time in literature more deeply reflects people's concept of time in real life, deepening people's concept of time in real life. Myths and legends are the earliest literary genres that emerged in China. Chinese classical novels, especially narrative novels, are bound to draw many nutrients from mythological novels. The space-time, embodied in literature, is another reflection of the space-time phenomenon in real life. With the gradual maturity of classical novels, the artistic level of space-time narration has also been improved.

Chinese classical novels, especially narrative novels, are often influenced by mythological novels, which means they may have borrowed time, space and narrative elements from mythology (Birrell, 1993).

Through the narrative analysis of specific literary works, a clear understanding of the differences, in narrative ideas between Chinese and Western classical literature, can be gained, such as the presentation of time and space in the Chinese classical novel *Dream of the Red Chamber*. In this novel, time seems to be circular and complete, reflecting the concept of circulation in Chinese culture. In contrast, the linear development of the timeline in Shakespeare's play *Hamlet* is related to the emphasis on causality in Western literature. Comparing the different perspectives on time, in Chinese and Western literature, can help to better understand the narrative methods in different literary traditions.

(2) The narrative time in Chinese classical literature

The view of time reflected in Chinese classic stories is inextricably linked to the views of heaven and the universe in the history of Chinese philosophy. The investigation of time in Chinese narratology inevitably involves thinking about the history of ancient philosophy, from which narratology was born. The expression of time by the Chinese people and the resulting overall concept of time vividly reflect the stereotype of time by the Chinese people. Behind this phenomenon, there is a very rich literary connotation hidden. That is to say, the Chinese literary community attaches great importance to the opening of narrative works because it often regards this opening as a natural and smooth expression and constructs a philosophical opening with an extremely arbitrary mentality.

Chinese cosmology typically emphasizes cycles, harmony, wholeness and correlation. The concepts in Chinese philosophy, such as yin and yang, the five elements, the Dao of Taoism and the destiny of Confucianism, all emphasize the correlation and interdependence among all things in the universe. This worldview holds that nature and the universe are a large, organic whole, rather than a linear and separate system.

This worldview has had a profound impact on the concept of time in Chinese classic stories. The concept of time in classical Chinese stories often exhibits cyclicity, with the repetition of history, the cycle of fate and the harmonious resonance between individual life and the universe. This is consistent with the emphasis on holism and correlation in Chinese cosmology.

The correlation between Chinese cosmology and time perspective reflects the way related thinking is carried out. In related thinking, the correlation between events and elements is considered important, without necessarily emphasizing strict causal relationships. This way of thinking focuses more on the whole and interdependence, as well as the understanding of complex relationships. In contrast, causal thinking places more emphasis on the causal

relationship among events, pursuing clear causes and consequences. This way of thinking tends to be more linear and logical, and it usually dominates Western philosophy and science.

Chinese novels often outline a complete picture of time at the beginning of narration, covering historical changes through a wide range of time manipulation, thereby conveying the philosophical and historical ideas that writers attempt to interpret. The rapid flow of time and its literary, history and philosophical connotations can, to a certain extent, evoke people's eternal and ever-changing emotions about life. Increased appreciation may also be due to improved understanding. This is a more common influence that can also occur when rereading nonliterary narratives. The issue of foresight, in traditional Chinese thought, is linked to current development theories (Simandan, 2018, p. 35).

“The Book of Changes”, as an ancient Chinese classic, has influenced many aspects of Chinese literature. Its text is full of symbols and metaphors, which are often borrowed and cited in classical Chinese literary works. Ancient literati often created poetry, prose and drama based on the philosophical ideas in “The Book of Changes”, which deeply influenced the style and theme of Chinese literature (Yang, 2021, p. 2049130).

1) Time with significant relativity

The ancient Chinese people were well aware of the relativity of time and space, so they inevitably had a broad-minded attitude when facing life. In the traditional Chinese view of time, the scales of relativistic time and secular time are different, but their operating mechanisms are the same. That is to say, space coexists with time, while space-time is interrelated, and there is interaction and impact between the two. In literary works, the existence of relative time can meet the author's creative goals. The author either wants to express his fantasy and imagination about the unknown world, or he wants to express his attitude towards real life, or his understanding of his fate. In short, establishing relative time can better explain the author's thoughts and emotions, and the expression effect of such thoughts and emotions cannot be achieved if it is described in a normal physical time manner. Artistic narration is recognized in fictional genres, such as poetry, drama, fiction, short stories and movies (Oatley; Maja, 2018, p. 161; Matin, 2020, p. 79). Related thinking often tends to view events and elements as interrelated and interdependent. This aligns with the way of thinking that regards space and time as coexisting and influencing each other. In related thinking, the connections among things may emphasize their relative positions and interrelationships in time and space more than just their causal relationships.

2) Time clearly reflected in the text

Chinese classical literature is based on history, and the literature derived from it is naturally influenced by the times and has left a deep impression on its narrative structure. From this point of view, it can be seen that the timing of ancient Chinese stories is a special

art that sets off the ancient world and expresses a complete concept of time in a complete way. The relativity contained in it is a perfect use, both for its broad meaning and for the writer's thoughts. Of course, no matter what kind of literary work it is, it would not completely erase time from the text, and it would inevitably reflect the development of the story based on a specific timeline.

(3) The narrative space in Chinese classical literature

Ancient Chinese myths and legends have a profound impact on the description of space in literature, creating a colorful artistic world for literature, and endowing space art with a strong mysterious color. In the ancient people's eyes, the world was a huge and mysterious place. Everywhere is a thrilling sense of mystery, demonstrating people's boundless reverence for the world.

Although the creation of classics is inseparable from the development of time, and the linear development of time promotes the development of stories, the creation of literature cannot be separated from space (Huang; Erik, 1995). Chinese classical spatiotemporal narrative techniques are not only related to the grand spatiotemporal background, but also often take several independent spatiotemporal backgrounds as the background, in which mutually independent spatiotemporal contexts are interspersed. In terms of architectural design, it is influenced by traditional Chinese literature, as well as religious beliefs, such as Buddhism and Taoism, and it has Chinese traditional characteristics. Literary novel works have humanization and educational value because they reflect the different characters' perspectives and cultivate the readers' moral education through narrative imagination (Madina; Galo; Angela, 2020, p. 548).

In this paper, "narrative space" is the core concept of discussion, which refers to the place or environment where narrative behavior takes place. However, this term is not associated with the unique tradition of China novels formed since the Tang Dynasty by default. Although "narrative space" is widely used in Western literary theory, in China's novels, it is necessary to explore its specific historical and cultural relations in order to better understand the comparison of narrative thoughts between Chinese and Western classical literatures.

The framework of "time-space-time-time-space" is used to extract and merge the spatiotemporal information of the novel text and the author's. This framework helps readers perceive the instantaneous spatial pattern in the reading time flow, and it helps contemporary readers to re-understand the classic narrative and its context in a variety of possible, integrated and in-depth ways. This shows the complexity of time-space narration and how to reinterpret literary works through new analytical methods.

(4) The influence of the concept of time and space on classical literature

The unique concepts of “space” and “space” in ancient Chinese society have a profound relationship with the Chinese people’s “time” experience and “life” consciousness, as well as the relationship between “space” and “space”. Its main characteristic is to transform abstract philosophy into concrete images. Chinese classical works often convert “eternal” and “absolute” into “figurative”, making it easy for ordinary people to accept. In the Chinese people’s experiential world, describing an abstract thing, in a specific way, is a way to maximize the approximation of absolute truth. Only in real life, people can recognize, understand and gain “eternal” experience. The conceptual fields of narration and dialogue are basically complementary and play various communicative functions in the novel (Bianchi; Sara, 2020, p. 98).

1) Creating an independent commentator

In ancient Chinese literary works, there is often a cross between “poetry” and “literature”, and the complementarity of “poetry” and “literature” is a unique literary phenomenon in ancient Chinese literature. The study of China, at the beginning, was actually a discussion of the issues of primary concern to Chinese literature. The structural content of the opening chapter and the other chapters, due to their literary connotations and functions, occupies different positions in narration. Because “opening” occupies a very important position in Chinese narrative poetry, it also occupies a crucial position in expressing the concept of “time as a whole” and in the narrative structure of “[...] spanning time and space” (Tamari, 2019, p. 89).

2) The sense of openness and freedom

Everything, in heaven and earth, is changing rapidly, and the understanding of life has made ancient poetry more broad-minded. In the vast sea of stars, no matter where people are, there is always a place to stay. The ordinary and tiny joy is contained in the boundless sadness, which is the deepest feeling of time in Chinese classic novels.

1.2 ART OF TIME AND SPACE NARRATION IN WESTERN CLASSICAL LITERATURE

The consciousness of time and space in the ancient West also took a long time to form. From the “Way of Time”, embodied in the first work of the Bible to the increasingly perfect “Way of Time” later on, all of them embody the unique creative concepts and methods of Western literati.

(1) The formation of the concept of time and space in the ancient West

Whether Westerners or Chinese, they all live in the long river of time, without exception. The appearance of the image of the “hourglass” means that “everyone lives and dies in time”. Western countries are very concerned about the passage of time, so this expression

has been used since the Renaissance. Because it can connect the past with the future, it must be an eternal world. Aristotle's worldview differs from the ideas in Western Christian culture because Christian culture believes that God created a finite world rather than an eternal one.

The West has its own unique understanding of "time and space", which means expressing "time" in terms of "space". In European and American classical works, people often describe space as a beautiful garden, where people and nature are integrated and everything shines. The writer's description of peaceful life shows a beautiful picture of both love and beauty. In this wonderful space-time, the flow of time is integrated with space-time. It is through the construction of this charming intertwined scene of time and space that the author reminds one of the Garden of Eden without time constraints from another perspective. It is a symbol of eternity, and it reminds the reader of this symbol of eternity, thereby realizing the goal of expressing the eternity of time through space. The increase in taste seems to be mainly related to an increase in perceptual comprehension, not to the level of literariness (Kuijpers; Frank, 2018, p. 619; Mackenzie, 2019, p. 65).

Although Genesis was the first book in the Bible, it was not the earliest written because it was created during the expulsion of Jews to Babylon. Western narratives are influenced by Greek culture, but it is also pointed out that this viewpoint may be too simplistic, as Western narratives are also influenced by Eastern culture, especially Sumerian one. The background and complexity of time narrative, as well as the interaction between Eastern and Western cultures, are described.

(2) The narrative time in Western classical literature

1) Analytical time

Unlike China, in the West, people do not regard "New Year" as the most solemn holiday. In the West, "New Year" does not have much literary connotation. China does not regard "New Year" as the most important festival of the year, and it does not have much literary connotation. It is precisely because of the independent status of "Japan", in Western society, and the advantages of Western society in understanding "Japan" that the Western society's narrative strategy in narrating history is centered somewhere. The narrative perspective in the West is decentralized, while the narrative perspective in China is holistic. The Western region is fragmented, with the focus only on describing individual periods.

2) Time with special meaning

Western classical works originated from Greek mythology, and the "time" in Greek classical works is its main content. The narrative structure of Greek mythological stories is precisely arranged in order, with time as the main line and the clue. In the development of mythology, the element of time plays a pivotal role. But, in mythology, it has special literary and educational significance. As a person living in a mythological era, an inherent logic, in

their thoughts, is that their birth is often given a unique literary meaning to demonstrate their noble identity. It is against this background that it has a specific meaning of time, and thus highlights the important position of time and mythological characters. The history of literature is the act of synthesizing, classifying, evaluating and sequencing, and it is often heavily invested in nostalgia and ideology.

3) Linear development time

In the Western classical narrative tradition, due to the differences between Chinese and Western literature, their narrative methods are unique compared to China's ones. Its most prominent feature is its analytical view of time compared to the overall sense of time in China and, compared to Western classical novels, the temporal clues of linear narration are more explicit. In Chinese literary works, there are often some numbers that contain traditional Chinese literature, such as "three". In Chinese classical works, not all the numbers are accurately expressed, but many are expressed. However, this is still far from Western numbers with specific meanings.

(3) The narrative space in Western classical literature

1) Space displayed in Western physical geography

The Mediterranean is the birthplace of Western civilization, and ancient Greece's glory is a prominent symbol of Mediterranean civilization. One of the most distinctive characteristics of island literature is its sense of "space". The strong emotions, generated by the perception of space, also have a direct impact on the personality of Western literature. People who live on the island instinctively feel that the island is isolated from the world. This is different from people living on land, which is a continuous whole. Therefore, land can create the illusion that "somewhere is the center". However, for people living on islands, their world is divided, and their world is in a disconnected state. They jump from one island to another, like jumping chess pieces, and can move freely. These islands are relatively independent, so the ocean gives the impression that "no one can be ignored". It is in this space environment that a maritime nation's independent thinking has been formed. This awareness is reflected in Western literature as follows: Western literature focuses on individuals as the primary object of attention. For example, in narrative novels, the position of their primary space is very clear. Unlike Chinese literature, it first requires a grand spatial context. In classical literature, narrative space can be the geographical space of reality, as well as the authors' and readers' imaginative space. The space in literary works is constructed through words and imagination, thus transcending the limitations of physical space.

2) The space presented in Western classical literature

Although time narration, in the form of “straight lines”, occupies a prominent position in Western classical novels, this does not mean that there is no “space-time” narrative technique in Western classical novels.

3) The spatial turn in modern Western literature and art

The tradition of Western classical novels is to narrate in chronological order, and this characteristic is particularly evident in classical novels. However, with the development of literature and art, people are deliberately breaking, dissolving and diluting this narrative order. Narration is an art in which time and space coexist. If only one aspect is emphasized, it would lead to deviation. In recent years, the characteristics of spatial processing in Western classical works have increasingly attracted academic attention, which also reflects the previous neglect and weakness of its research. Although the concept of narrative has become increasingly popular among scholars in this field over the past two decades, it has not been accompanied by its full ontological, epistemological and methodological significance of active and critical participation (Graef; Raquel; Nicolas, 2020, p. 431).

4) The important influence of Western ancient time and space concept on classical literature

In the West, the legendary fusion of time and space is natural. In some tribal legends, supernatural forces are not limited to the chaotic universe, but to the region where the tribe resides. In Western classical novels, “illusion” and “reality” are one of their most prominent characteristics. Western writers would consciously conduct a profound exploration of the nature of time and space. Due to the convenience of maritime transportation, navigation, industry, commerce and trade have all been greatly developed, all of which cannot be separated from the “word of mouth” method. The invention of Greek characters also provided great convenience for the later development of literature. The main challenge of literary history is to construct interrelated historical and rhetorical series. However, they cannot be made independent, but rather explain the changes in the two fields to each other (Quayson, 2019, p. 131).

China’s philosophical traditions and of the West are, to some extent, contradictory to each other, and there are differences in their philosophical thinking methods in ethics and values. Chinese philosophy emphasizes the universe’s organic and holistic nature, believing that everything is interrelated and interdependent. Western philosophy usually places greater emphasis on causal relationships and mechanistic worldviews. These different worldviews have influenced philosophical thinking and perspectives on the world.

The differences and changes, in the respective traditions of Chinese and Western literature, need to be taken into account, as well as the changes and developments in different historical periods. Different historical periods may lead to different literary styles and narrative

methods. Considering the regional and cultural differences between China and the West, China's literary traditions and of the West may have significant differences in geography and culture, which can affect the development of narrative methods.

2 COMPARISON OF NARRATIVE THOUGHTS IN CHINESE AND WESTERN CLASSICAL LITERATURE

2.1 COMPARISON OF THE INFLUENCE OF SPACE-TIME CONCEPTS IN CHINESE AND WESTERN LITERATURE AND ART

“The interaction between heaven and man” has had a profound impact on ancient Chinese philosophy. This theory believes that the development of all things in the world is closely related to human survival. Therefore, everything has a reason. All changes in the world contain a law. The Chinese people's sense of time and space is also full of integrity and change. In contrast, the West is more willing to view the world as a whole. Within a substantive framework, everything has its own fixed position and cannot exist here or there at the same time. Due to differences in Chinese philosophical and religious thoughts, differences in ideas, between the West and China, have resulted in differences in their first concerns. Chinese people tend to start from a big perspective, with a holistic perspective, placing each individual in the big world to seek their own position and value. Westerners have an analytical perspective. They are accustomed to viewing the world from a narrow perspective. These two different modes of thinking lead to significant differences between Chinese and Western classical novels in terms of writing techniques and styles. Chinese literature has always included the past and present for a long time, recording the world's every corner. However, in Western classical works, people usually focus on the treatment of one person, one object, and one scene, striving to depict the details to the extreme, thereby accurately conveying the ideological content that the author wants to express.

In Chinese culture, holistic thinking is important, and people tend to consider themselves in a larger context, which may include considering aspects, such as family, society, culture, natural environment and the universe. Therefore, to understand an individual's position in a large picture, the first step is to understand the various components of the picture, and emphasize harmony and interdependence in relevant thinking frameworks. Individuals can strive to find resonance and harmony with others and other components in the big picture, which may include establishing close interpersonal relationships, participating in social activities and protecting the environment.

2.2 THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN CHINESE AND WESTERN NARRATIVE SPACE-TIME ART

It is illogical to overemphasize the same or the different. The most important thing is to analyze their respective facts to obtain an accurate and reasonable conclusion, and provide some valuable ways of thinking for future literary creation or literary theory, making their own modest contribution to Chinese and Western literature.

First of all, in terms of narrative methods, due to the subtle perception of space and time in the West, their works often focus on describing events that occur in a short period of time. Therefore, the Western countries' works always grow from small to large. Chinese works range from large to small. This also reflects the differences between Chinese and Western literary ideas: Westerners emphasize analysis, while Chinese emphasize integrity.

The traditional Western thought, embodied in the temporal and spatial narration of literature, is also an open thought. For example, the protagonist in a novel, after experiencing a long time, does not want to start anew, nor does he want to hide in the mountains and forests and return to his own life like Chinese scholars. The Chinese mind is a circle that repeats itself in cycles. Because of this, in terms of time and space, Chinese people have a more dialectical understanding of time and space. Therefore, Chinese classics also have more profound philosophy and charm.

There are differences in the understanding of time and space between Chinese literature and European literature, and literature has been developing from Greek mythological epics to a more complex dialectical overall transformation of realistic novels. Chinese literature has a dialectical understanding of time and space, and European literature has also undergone changes and evolution in its development. Literature has complexity and diversity, and there may be multiple ways of understanding among different literary traditions.

Secondly, in terms of the structure of the work, the space and time in China are relatively broad, while the space and time in the West are relatively short and concentrated. At the same time, because Westerners possess a marine civilization, their maritime transportation is very developed, and they can sail thousands of kilometers within a day. This gives Westerners a natural optimistic and excited attitude towards space, which is reflected in Western classical works, namely, the unimpeded space and the smooth extension of time. Moreover, because China is full of mountains and rivers, Chinese narrative poetry attaches great importance to the multi-level spatial structure.

Thirdly, there are significant differences in the understanding of people in Chinese and Western literature in terms of philosophy and religion. This is the root cause of the above two levels of thinking. Ancient Chinese culture was deeply influenced by Confucianism, Buddhism and Taoism. Under the influence of Taoism, his broad-minded attitude towards life and his recognition of life have another dimension. From ancient times onward, Chinese

civilization has centered on “timing”, “geographical advantage” and “harmony among people”. The philosophy of “unity of heaven and man” has had a profound impact on ancient scholarly officials, which also makes them present a complete concept of time in their literary work. Due to the influence of Western Christianity, the philosophy of “dual opposition” and other factors, Westerners have a subtle sense of time, and they only do one thing at a certain moment. Therefore, their attitude towards time is very cautious and strict. Although the West does not pay enough attention at first, from its initial ambiguity to its modern epistemology, it has demonstrated the Westerners’ valuable self-reflection spirit.

2.3 COMPARISON OF CHINESE AND WESTERN CONCEPTS OF HUMAN RELATIONS

This article attempts to make a preliminary exploration of the relationship between “human relations” and “morality” in Chinese and Western novels. The connection between moral concepts and narration is closely connected, and this connection is sometimes expressed in literary ways, but more often in the characters’ image. Under the unchanging “moral outlook”, Chinese literature is adept at creating a “perfect” image, which is a personality ideal in the spirit of “altruism”. In the constantly changing concept of human relations, Westerners have demonstrated multiple human natures in the spirit of “selfishness” by shaping the image of “regret”. By comparing the humanistic spirit of Chinese and Western novels, people can gain a deeper understanding of the characters’ characteristics in the novels and explore the differences in narrative methods and concepts between Chinese and Western novels.

CONCLUSIONS

The purpose of this article was to take “character” as a special entry point. By comparing the two narrative methods in China and the West, people can recognize some characteristics of the two narrative methods in the West. Although ancient Chinese stories are very rich, they are not entirely suitable for modern story theory, which is why these stories are included in both Chinese and Western ones. Therefore, in order to facilitate comparison, this article proposed a view of “narrative thinking”: narrative thinking includes both content and form, as well as two forms of theory and practice. Among them, theoretical form is a narrative concept with Chinese and Western narrative theories as the core, while practical form is a narrative concept with Chinese and Western narrative practices as the core. Although time and space can be regarded as an inseparable entity, their emphasis in different literary works is not entirely the same. Due to regional differences, Chinese and Western literature also presents distinct characteristics in time and space. In general, there has been a lot of research on the temporal and spatial processing techniques of Chinese classical novels, and many academic

articles have been published in recent years. However, the research on the temporal and spatial narrative techniques of Chinese and Western classical novels is not in-depth enough.

Uma análise comparativa dos pensamentos narrativos na literatura clássica chinesa e ocidental

Resumo: O pensamento narrativo, na literatura chinesa, tem um valor indiscutível e agrega uma certa inspiração à análise que estuda as naturezas. Este artigo tem, como finalidade, comparar as ideias narrativas sob a perspectiva das literaturas chinesa e ocidental. As características temporais e espaciais distintas da China e do Ocidente foram estudadas, uma por uma, e as semelhanças e diferenças, entre o pensamento narrativo e os métodos de tempo e espaço, foram resumidas ao se analisar as diferentes regiões, literaturas, religiões e fatores filosóficos. Este texto analisou os conceitos, os pensamentos narrativos e as estratégias de narração, empregadas pelo autor, nas literaturas chinesa e ocidental. Por meio dessa análise, é possível descobrir os padrões de comportamento narrativo das diferentes literaturas, que aprofundam a compreensão geral de romances. Focar nos “indivíduos” permite compreender profundamente as diferenças dos métodos narrativos entre a China e o Ocidente, além de ser possível compará-los para entender melhor as semelhanças e diferenças entre eles, promovendo, assim, um melhor desenvolvimento geral da teoria do indivíduo. Este artigo explorou o pensamento narrativo das literaturas clássicas chinesa e ocidental, e agregou as características literárias, destacando a vitalidade da criação narrativa tradicional chinesa e desempenhando um papel positivo no desenvolvimento do pensamento narrativo humano, em um contexto teórico diversificado.

Palavras-chave: Pensamento Narrativo Chinês e Ocidental. Comparação Ideológica. Cultura e Literatura. Comportamento Narrativo.

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