

The Inheritance of Ancient European Epics on the Subject Matter of Ancient Epics

Sun Jingjing

Sichuan University, Chengdu, Sichuan 610200, China

Keywords: Middle Ages; Homer's epic; Subject matter; Epic study; Inheritance

Abstract: The epic is a mark of a major historical event and heroic performance in the early period of the nation. Although it has deeper mythological thinking, it is still an exhibition hall of the early spirit of the nation and an important cultural asset of the national spirit. In the history of world literature, many ancient countries in ancient Greece, India, and Europe have excellent long epics. The heroic epic is the leader in the medieval literary world in Europe. Its subject matter includes (war, hero, religion). It inherits the tradition of ancient epic depiction and transcends tradition. It indicates the new direction of the development of literary subject matter and becomes European literature. By analyzing the subject matter of medieval epics, this paper can further understand the development of European literature and objectively evaluate the status of medieval literature in the history of European literature.

1. Introduction

The culture of medieval Europe is a new cultural collection of heroic ideas in the barbarian culture and Christian culture advocating theological beliefs. Since Aristotle, the epic is an literary theory with an absolute dominant genre. The Greek Homer epic Iliad and Odyssey, as pioneers of European epics, pioneered the tradition of European epic, Europe. Literature has developed along this tradition [1]. The European medieval epic vividly reflects the integration and composition of specific cultural factors in the Middle Ages in Europe. It is essentially a new cultural text form with the heroic consciousness of the barbarian as the mainstay, with the focus on realistic events as the carrier and the spirit of religious theology as the core. . The ancient epics involved in this article mainly refer to the ancient Greek Homer epic, and the medieval epic refers to the epic produced in the 5th to 15th centuries. By analyzing the subject matter of medieval epics, we can further understand the development process of European literary history and lay the status of medieval literature in the history of European literature.

2. Overview of European epic development

The epic refers to the ancient long narrative poems based on legends or major historical events. The category of narrative poems is a non-repeatable form of folk literature. It is a "poetic history." An epic is a treasure house of folk literature and an "encyclopedia" that recognizes the social life of all ethnic groups [2]. The ability to have a great epic is often an important criterion for measuring the achievements of a nation or even a country.

The genre of epic is more developed in Western culture and preserved relatively well. There are seven elements in the epic: hero, war, love, death, travel, friends, and God. 1. Worshipping heroes and singing heroes are common themes of ancient epics and medieval epics. Epic heroes must inevitably admire self, publicity, and advocating rationality and advocating temperance. Heroic epics are divided into early and late stages. The early heroic epic was formed in the early Middle Ages, with a strong demon color and witchcraft atmosphere. The famous ones are "Beowulf" and "Eda". Celebrate the glorious deeds of the tribal heroes. The late heroic epic was formed in the middle of the middle ages, which was gradually formed in the feudal state. The central theme is patriotism and heroism.

As a masterpiece of the ancient Greek oral literature, Homer's Epic is regarded as the first

monument in the history of Western literature. It has been recognized as a model of literature for two thousand years. According to legend, it was named after the compilation of the ancient Greek poet Homer [3]. The original material of the epic comes from myths and legends and heroes that have been widely circulated for centuries, mainly for the memory of the Trojan war and heroes of future generations. The Homer Epic is also known as the Bible of Western thought. It is the source of Western literature. It consists of the Iliad and the Odyssey. It depicts the transition of the ancient Greeks from the clan society to the slave society. The state of thought, religion, sports, education, customs, etc., known as the encyclopedia of the ancient Greeks, has far-reaching influence on later literary creation and other aspects. The ancient Greeks learned from the epic, received education, and gained strength, especially the formation of the image of the hero, the blending of realism and romanticism, and the combination of high-level generalization and vivid description, becoming the education and culture of ancient Greece. The cornerstone has had a profound impact on European medieval literature.

European medieval epics refer to epics from the 5th to the 15th centuries. Due to the different content reflected in the epic, the medieval epics are generally divided into early epics and later epics. The previous epic mainly reflected the life of the barbarian tribes at the end of the clan society. At that time, the society was basically not feudalized and generally not influenced by Christianity. The representative works are the Anglo-Saxon "Beowulf", as well as the 68-line Germanic "Hildebrandt's Song" and the Icelandic "Eda" and "Saga"; the late medieval epic It reflects the desire of people of all European countries to establish a unified feudal state after the high degree of feudalization. The representative works include the French song "Roland", the Spanish "Cid", the German "Song of Nibelungen" and Finland. The "Heroes of the Kingdom" ("Kalevala") and so on. Compared with the ancient Greek epic "Iliad" and "Odyssey", the ancient epic retains the tradition of ancient epic in terms of subject matter, but the scope and performance of literary description greatly expands due to the diversity of medieval culture and art. Therefore, the content of the epic has been expanded, and the traditional content has been given new qualities.

3. The Inter-era Influence of Homer's Epic on European Medieval Epics

3.1 The Literary Characteristics of Homer's Epic

The blending of realism and romanticism to shape characters is a major feature of Homer's Epic. On the one hand, the image of the hero of Homer's Epic has a quite romantic legend. On the other hand, the heroes are full of realism, which is traceable in the real society of ancient Greece.

In the portrayal of the character's character, Homer's Epic has created different characters through the unity of commonality and individuality [4]. The characters in the epic are placed in major contradictions and conflicts, focusing on the description of the actions and language of the characters. The different character characters presented to the readers have the commonality of national heroes and strong personality.

In Homer's Epic, the description of the big scene, the background of the great era, and the war often uses a combination of highly generalized and vivid detailed descriptions. For a large number of people, complex and varied war descriptions, it is not a comprehensive display of all. Rather, through refining, to take the rough and fine, to see the big and small, from the individual to the general, with a high degree of generalization to intercept some important fragments to write, the character is distinct and at the same time, the rhythm control and contradiction are also attached great importance. Through the description of specific people and things in reality, the historical facts are summarized, so that when people feel the tragic and cruel history, they can also understand the details of love and death. The original profound historical content is expressed through the detailed description of the specific characters, which makes the Homer Epic have a strong artistic appeal.

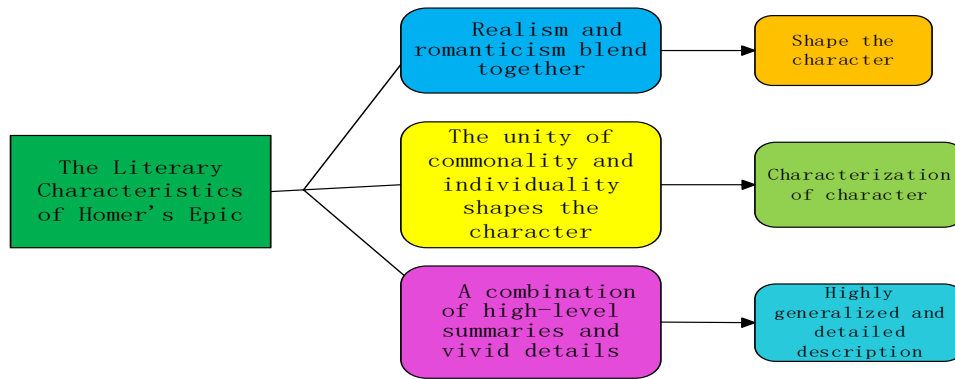


Figure 1. The literary features of Homer's Epic

3.2 The Inter-era Influence of Homer's Epic on European Medieval Epics

Romanticism is definitely not a representation in the creation of literature, but a critique of real life in that era. Romanticism is different from realism and expresses dissatisfaction with the real society by an ideal environment similar to the hypothesis. The essence of romance is actually embodied in reality [5]. The complex real society is expressed in various expressions. In Homer's Epic, the romantic expression has been well applied. Especially in the shaping of the characters, through the dual application of romanticism and realism, the readers will be introduced to the deep understanding of the heroes and the understanding of the society in the era. With rich fantasies and enthusiasm combined with the real social situation to shape the character of heroes, in the case of extreme dissatisfaction with reality, it also reflects the aesthetic concept of the pursuit of ideals. The European knight system was a period of development that reached its peak in the Middle Ages. The spirit of the Cavaliers is heroic, loyal and honest, making the Cavaliers one of the most important segments of Western society. Influenced by the "Homer's Epic", the knight spirit was injected into the development of epic. This romantic literary creation method has gradually become a basic creative method and creative style of literary art. It also has an interdisciplinary influence on European medieval epics.

One of the important differences between Western cultural thoughts and Chinese cultural thoughts is that Western culture has strong individual-based cultural values, and China has always emphasized the values of collective importance. Therefore, in Homer's Epic, the character's character is shaped, more character personality, and more hero characters are very prominent in the mutual unity of character commonality and individuality [6]. Achilles is the ideal image of ancient heroic warriors, with a strong myth. Character is violent, self-willed, stubborn, does not accept apology, in order to avenge the innocence of friends, "Homer's Epic" in the writing shows both the brave side of Achilles, but also shows its reckless personality Hector also has a heroic side, but unlike Achilles, Hector is more collectivist. Knowing that you want to defeat you, you will die in order to defend the country; Odysseus is a heroic and war-torn person, "Homer's Epic", we can find out when analyzing the characteristics of these three major heroes.

The ingenious layout, complete structure, and proper tailoring of Homer's Epic make Homer's Epic a highly artistic masterpiece. The two epics are each related to the events that took place in the past ten years [7, 8]. They describe the Greek society extensively, but they are not using the straightforward creation method. The author chooses a highly concentrated generalization method to concentrate the main plot on a central figure. The main content is described by a specific and complete incident, and the main contradiction of the story is summarized in a short period of time. Make a large number of life pictures and a large number of characters into a rigorous whole, which will be presented to the readers.

Table 1 The Intergenerational Influence of Homer's Epic on European Medieval Epics

The Intergenerational Influence of Homer's Epic on European Medieval Epics	romanticism	The unity of commonality and individuality shapes the character	Highly generalized and vivid combination of detailed descriptions
	Influence on poetry creation	The influence of medieval tramp novels.	The influence of modern war fiction.
	Influence on the novel	The influence on modern novels.	The influence of historical novels
	The impact of modern literature on the times.		

3.3 Analysis of European Medieval Epic Religious Subjects

The transformation from ancient polytheism to medieval monotheism is the progress of human religious concept, reflecting that human beings think about themselves and their surroundings from sensibility to rationality. The religious consciousness in Homer's epic, by shaping this kind of god, represents the opposition between man and nature, reflecting the ignorant interpretation of nature and self in Greek society. At that time, people used this religious fantasy to understand nature and overcome nature. In Homer's epic, God and human beings are homosexual, intimate with people, and directly participate in human activities. In the Middle Ages, God's functions were highly concentrated and Abstracted into an omnipotent God [9]. The Christian monotheistic system is precisely adapted to the requirements of the European feudal society for national unity and social order.

The European medieval heroic epic inherits the tradition of ancient epics in terms of subject matter, and incorporates the characteristics of the times, so that the traditional content of the epic gives a new era connotation. The same is about war, heroes, and religion. The ancient Homer epic does not judge all wars by the standards of justice and injustice. On the basis of affirming all wars, it praises all heroes--natural heroes. In terms of religion, it is a polytheistic belief and focuses on the religious ritual itself. In the epic of the heroes of the Middle Ages, the judgments of war and heroes were marked by political imprints, using political norms to evaluate wars, affirming the war of unifying the country and consolidating politics, evaluating heroes with social politics and moral standards, and shaping The spiritual hero of social moral connotation focuses on the humanity shown in the hero; in the religious aspect, it is worshipped by many gods and developed into the god of faith-God.

4. Conclusion

European medieval epics are mostly based on real historical events or historical figures. In the characteristic value of thought, it shows the strong existence of the "human" factor in a specific historical and cultural period, and expresses the main purpose of "human being is a hero", emphasizing the ability and value of people in a certain era. The heroic epic belongs to non-mainstream literature in medieval Europe, and it is inevitably influenced by mainstream culture and mainstream literature at that time. As a submarine stream of medieval literature, it inherits ancient Greek literature in terms of content, and lowers the Renaissance humanist literature. On the basis of inheriting tradition, it transcends tradition and heralds a new direction of literary subject matter. Pay attention to people and pay attention to the unity of the nation and the country. This kind of subject matter has become the basic content of the humanist literature in the Renaissance.

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