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THE VIETNAMESE MEDIEVAL CHUANQI GENRE (FROM PLOT STRUCTURE AND CHARACTER CREATION)

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ABSTRACT OF THESIS DOCTORATE OF LITERATURE

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INTRODUCTION

1. Reasons for choosing the subject

1.1 Predominance based approach to Vietnamese medieval literature.

1.2 The importance of chuanqi genre in the Vietnamese medieval literary structure.

1.3 The chuanqi genre with these characteristic identified advocacy itinerary has not been thoroughly researched yet. The two basic aspects of this genre are the plot structure and character creation. However, they have not been explored systematically until now.

1.4 The practical significance of the research is to support teaching and researching chuanqi works in high school, colleges, and universities.

2. Purposes and research tasks

2.1. Research purposes

The dissertation studies characteristics and the evolution of the Vietnamese medieval chuanqi, from the two aspects: plot structure and character creation.

2.2. Research tasks

- The dissertation identifies category and sets criteria in term of genre identification, and category of chuanqi titles based on 16 works.
- The dissertation also makes contribution to the foundation and establishment of the appearance of the Vietnamese medieval chuanqi.
- The dissertation studies the plot structure, the narrative pattern and prose in the chuanqi tales and then indicates the specific narrative methods, the continuation, modification of the method through the advocacy itinerary of this genre.
- The dissertation shows the types of characters, measures of character creations from which it also indicates the stability as well as innovation in artistic conception of the human person, in the approach and the creation of human image through the Vietnamese medieval chuanqi genre.

3. The subject and scope of the research

3.1 The subject

Vietnamese medieval chuanqi tales in single works and collections which have been translated and published until now (205 chuanqi works in 16 books - see Appendix 1, 2).

3.2 The scope

Features of the medieval chuanqi genre in its history are explored in two highlights: plot structure and character creation.

4. Research methodology

The dissertation used several main research methodologies such as: genre research, literary comparison method, historical method and narratology.

5. Contributions of the dissertation

- Introduces the concept of Vietnamese medieval chuanqi with the specific criteria for distinguishing chuanqi genre with other genres.

- Survey, codified catalog includes 205 chuanqi works from the collection of Vietnamese medieval narrative prose.

- Comprehensive study of various aspects of the plot structure and character creation in the Vietnamese medieval chuanqi, to clarify the characteristics and explain the evolution of this genre, while confirming contributions of chuanqi writers with the construction period prose ethnic background.

6. Contents of the dissertation

Besides the introduction, conclusion, list of research works of the authors related to the dissertation topic, directory reference and appendix, the main content of the dissertation are conducted in four chapters:

Chapter 1: *Research overview and theoretical framework of the dissertation*

Chapter 2: *Vietnamese medieval chuanqi genre - The origins and appearance*

Chapter 3: *Vietnamese medieval chuanqi genre in terms of plot structure*

Chapter 4: *Vietnamese medieval chuanqi genre in terms of character creation*

Chapter 1
RESEARCH OVERVIEW AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK OF THE DISSERTATION

1.1. Research overview

According to us, the history of studying the chuanqi genre can be generalised into the following main trends.

1.1.1. Approaching and assessing the value of chuanqi works

This is the main trend and it is also originated early. The works which draws much attention are namely *Linh Nam chich quai luc, Thanh Tong di*

thao, Truyen ky man luc, Truyen ky tan pha, Cong du tiep ky, Lan Tri kien van luc,… the remaining works are not still carried out much. In some works written by a variety of styles, chuanqi tales are not separately indentified. An overview of content and value of art are the main directions of the works mentioned in this article. These comments on the establishment of position of chuanqi works in the history of national literature provide initially the writers with envision of the evolution of chuanqi genre.

1.1.2. Studying chuanqi works from a comparative perspective

By recognizing Vietnamese medieval chuanqi tales in the relationships, researcher often focuses on two issues: chuanqi tale compared with culture, folklore of nation; chuanqi tale compared with foreign literature. In order to gain achievement and value of chuanqi works, it took excellent scholars such as Ha Thien Han, Le Quy Don, Phan Huy Chu,... and researchers such as K.I. Golugina, B.L. Riptin, Kawamoto Kurive, Tran Ich Nguyen, Tran Dinh Su, Pham Tu Chau, Nguyen Dang Na, Nguyen Nam,… study and recognize. The oral literature of the nation is considered as a launch for writers to stimulate strongly and rapidly the path of the chuanqi genre. Recognizing Vietnamese tales in relation to the Chinese chuanqi works or other chuanqi works in East Asia, the reader are not only observed appearance of the category in the transnational scope, but also seen the charaterictics, oriented thinking and the Vietnames writer's own marks.

1.1.3. Researching and evaluating the chuanqi genre from a genre-based perspective

By the 90s of the twentieth century that researches of chuanqi works like an independent genre were conducted. However, the work of Nguyen Du was still regconized as a typical work by most of the scholars. Some works focus on studying the system of the chuanqi works, or survey the text like *Nghien cuu van ban va danh gia the loai truyen ky bang chu Han o Viet Nam thoi trung dai* (Pham Van Tham), or expand the chuanqi genre like a collection of type composed by different forms (*Truyen truyen ky Viet Nam, dac diem hinh thai - van hoa - lich su,* Nguyen Phong Nam). The way of considering problem is still limited and based on a group of the authors in a certain time. Some researchs of Vu Thanh is a typical example.

1.1.4. Researching the plot structure and the character creation in the chuanqi tale

The plot structure and character creation are the key factors of a narrative text. The researchers need take care of the character creation methods, the origin of plot as well as narrative techniques so that they can understand the content and the artistic value of chuanqi work as well. However, the plot and plot structure, the characters and character creation way are still only considered at the level single story or collection of stories. The characteristics and the evolution of the chuanqi genre from these two aspects are still not answered.

1.2. The theoretical framework of the dissertation

1.2.1. The general theoretical basis

- ***The genre-based theory***

Principles of the research methodology are the principles of category and history. The genre is considered as a kind of text or a historical phenomenon which not only stabilizes but constantly changes as well.

- ***The narratology framework***

Plot structure and character creation are the two most important aspects in a narrative text. Through plot structure and character creation, reader may observe the relative face of a comprehensive category, from the human model to the organization of personality; from the plot structure to the methods to tell a story (narrative discourse).

1.2.2. The conception of chuanqi genre

The concept of chuanqi first appeared in the Tang dynasty, Bui Hinh used this name for his collection of "novel" (prose story) about fantastic themes, but related to his contemporaries real lives. In the Song dynasty, chuanqi became gradually the common name for this kind of weird magical novels originated from Tang dynasty and later on, researchers used it for the kind of fantasy novels which were limited to the Qing dynasty.

The chuanqi tales appeared in the life of Vietnamese medieval literature early. Due to the reality of compositions, it seems tobe clear that medieval writers were initially conscious of the genre identification. The concept chuanqi appeared at the 3 titles: *Truyen ky man luc*, *Truyen ky tan*

pha, Tan truyen ky luc,… However, the stories of Nguyen Du, Doan Thi Diem and Pham Quy Thich were written by artistic approaches in different styles. Like many other prose collections in the medieval period, the indication of the category of writer here is sometimes completely incompatible with the writing style. The chuanqi concept and the criteria for the identification of the chuanqi genre are nescessary formed on a number of compositions of the Vietnamese authors.

Suggesting a definition for the Vietnamese medieval chuanqi genre

The chuanqi genre is the kind of narrative prose in the medieval period with small or medium pattern (in terms of pages), a complete plot summary and characters shaped by its own mark. The chuanqi genre reflect fully the problems in the human life by virtual methods, artistic unique world together with the participation of the motif, unusual circumstances, grotesque, the contribution of characters (real or unreal character), the presence of the surreal, mythical space. The chuanqi associated with fiction and fantasy, confirmed the sense of autonomy and self-discipline in the creative arts of medieval writers.

In the above concept, the chuanqi genre is characterized by three aspects: ***Firstly***, the involvement of the fantasy to the character structure, plot structure. The concept of "kỳ" in the genre identification can be transmitted via the virtual concept at the two different levels and shades: strange (unusual, divergent, rare, weird,…) and virtual (surreal, fabulous,...); ***Secondly,*** the chuanqi genre is a perfect narrative, plot with a variety of events, circumstances arranged in the order and characters with certain incidents in their life and their personality; ***Finally***, the chuanqi genre is associated with the self-awareness, self-creativity of the writers.

Conclusion of Chapter 1

Chapter 1 introduced the research overview of the Vietnamese medieval chuanqi and the important theoretical background to the dissertation. On that basis, the author determines the essential aspects of the genre should focus exploited.

Chapter 2
VIETNAMESE MEDIEVAL CHUANQI GENRE
THE ORIGIN AND APPEARANCE

2.1. The basis of the formation and development of the Vietnamese medieval chuanqi genre

2.1.1. The historical and social basis

The chuanqi genre are born in the context of medieval society and history in which there are more favorable conditions for the emergence and existence of the mythical factors. That is the life of the inhabitants who live by agriculture, depend on nature, worship and fear the Gods and nature. It is the policy of the ruling class in the feudalism. They intentionally borrowed the power of gods, demons to build glory, reputation for the ruling class, which helped them prevent the human being in the world from the rebellion. It is the needs of the human during the time of confusion and deadlock. Social reality is not only material but also motivation for the development of the chuanqi genre.

2.1.2. The literary and cultural basis

The chuanqi genre are nourished and developed from the unreal sight of the human life, the world of the native polytheism and ideology of Confucianism - Buddhism - Daoism. The chuanqi genre recieve narrative experiences in the folktale from materials to aesthetic ideas. At the same time, Vietnamese writers also inherit the achievements of Chinese chuanqi tale. The ideology, folktale and foreign literature are important resources to promote the introduction and rule the propaganda of the chuanqi genre in Vietnames medieval.

2.2. The appearance of the Vietnamese medieval chuanqi genre

The evolution of Vietnamese medieval chuanqi takes place in three stages.

2.2.1. The period of formation

The first chuanqi have appeared in the second half of the fourteenth century - the first half of the fifteenth century. Well that's *Truyen Gieng Viet, Truyen Ha O Loi* in *Linh Nam chich quai luc*; *Su than di cua Minh Khong, Ap Lang chan nhan in Nam Ong mong luc.* Although the amount is not much, but the chuanqi works in this stage showed the maturity of the ethnic narrative prose.

2.2.2. The period of development

Second stage of the genre is the Vietnamese medieval chuanqi from the second half of the fifteenth century to the first half of the eighteenth century. It experienced three major milestones: *Thanh Tong di thao* - *Truyen ky man luc* - *Truyen ky tan pha*. The inheritance and innovation in ways of thinking about reality, in artistic style has helped Le Thanh Tong, Nguyen Du, Doan Thi Diem make up the golden age of the genre. *Thanh Tong di thao*, *Truyen ky man luc*, *Truyen ky tan pha* show the movement of the Vietnamese medieval prose, from the category of "royal literary", focused on the problems of the community, the nation, ethnic to the range "urban literary", taking about people in their daily. The characteristics of the genre is established, the stature of the genre is also confirmed.

2.2.3. The period of innovation

The change of the Vietnamese chuanqi were initiated from *Truyen ky tan pha*. However, it clearly expressed in *Cong du tiep ky*. If as in the previous period, the chuanqi associated with the mission of reflecting the human fate, exposing the their aspirations and tragedy, then from here, tasks of the genre has changed. The writers are biased towards "make strange" reality. Two important narrative trends of the chuanqi in the latter half of 18th-19th centuries is storytelling about famed characters and strange stories.

Conclusion of Chapter 2

The Vietnamese medieval chuanqi genre is really rich and complex. From *Linh Nam chich quai luc* to *Thinh van di luc*, this genre has gone through three stages: Forming - Development - Innovation. The face of this genre was created in the process renewal while maintaining stable featured.

Chapter 3
VIETNAMESE MEDIEVAL CHUANQI GENRE IN TERMS OF PLOT STRUCTURE

3.1. The plot pattern according to the structural form

After surveying the structural form of the chuanqi genre, we should pay attention to four main groups: seamless storyline, integrated plot, assembled plot, retrospective plot. Appearance and location of each type of chuanqi plot through the stages are changed much.

3.1.1. Seamless plot

Seamless plot associated with deploying a system events in the order of time and causality. This is a common arrangement in organizing the chuanqi plot (152/205 works, accounting for 74%). In terms of the form, the plot is not likely mentioned to the deliberate intervention of the writer; but in fact, this kind of structure is different from its moving process from the real life. The connection of time and causality only make the reader visualize the sequence of events which the character experienced. It is connection within the process of new events that is key to help them understand the nature of art images and the nature of the world.

Seamless plots in *Linh Nam chich quai luc, Thanh Tong di thao, Truyen ky mạn luc* often appears in stories related to the history about a life, a fate or smaller scale and character's journey. The narrative manner and the character through turn of events are demonstrated by the writers in the latter half of the 18th-19th centuries. Besides, they also proposed setting up a new model of the plot. Characters are put into situations, independent situations. They are connected not only by links in terms of time but under significant morals as well: the disclosure, notification about the nature of the recreated object. This organizational style opened a new approach to the reality for the chuanqi genre during this period: rewriting the old stories, old characters with new data. The change of the text is not in the plot frame but in the way the writers choose and set up circumstances for the action figures.

3.1.2. The integrated plot

The model of integrated plot in the history of the chuanqi genre appeared quite early. However, it is not the dominant type of plot. At first, the work *Bai ky giac mong* of Le Thanh Tong has successfully completed the task of testing a new narrative structure. The interlocking of the stories (stories within stories, stories parallel to the series) takes the reader back to reality of a painful past and also recognizes the contemporary reality. After *Thanh Tong di thao*, the integrated plot were created only a couple of times in some chuanqi works. Following the style of Le Thanh Tong, besides the arrangement of a new storyline in the heart of the story which is being repeated, the time in which the narratives are come back to the past, the expansion of narative space connecting to the real and virtual factors; the plot

is integrated with method: "concealment" and "recognization" while describing reality. The integrated plot is not featured by the chuanqi genre, but from now, the reader can see the efforts of the medieval writer in the research of a multilayer structure to convey the message of the multifaceted reality.

3.1.3. The assembled plot

The assembled plot is created in the arrangement of different stories together. In generall, each story is a unit and it reproduces a range of independent reality. Relations between the story can be set vertically or horizontally. Vertically, the characters with life and various fate are placed in phylogenetic relationships (father - son, grandfather - grandchildren) or seen from the experience of reincarnation (previous life – afterlife). Horizontally, the story is the independent realization in terms of content, but there is also a close or certain similarity in meaning and the expressed message. The assembled plot can see a test of chuanqi writers in the 18th-19th centuries in the expansion of scale in which the chuanqi genre are reflected. It seems tobe the compensation for the shortcomings of the tendency on which only a problem is focused.

3.1.4. Retrospective plot

Retrospective plot tied to the chronological order overturning event. Retrospective is used as a method for art writers reveal the secrets, the mysterious corners of a life, social status. Retrospective also stems from deliberate when looking to the past to mourn what was lost. The dialogue between past and present in *Cau chuyen o den Hang Vuong*, *Cuoc noi chuyen tho o Kim Hoa* really brought a different view of reality, where everything is in a state of incomplete, including history. With the retrospective plot, medieval writers often do not have intention to back the current attention of the reader to the past, they always aim to: identify the reflecting subject from nature and the depth of its history. The chuanqi retrospective plot is the result of the initial journey in making the narrative structure complex and also the preparation for the complex and multifaceted pattern of short stories compared with the modern times.

3.2. The plot structure from the narrative point of view

Based on the survey of the chuanqi tales, it appears that the point of view of traditional paradigms and traditional narrator (the objective narrative point of view, the narrator with only a point of view) still dominate. Besides,

the expression of cultural diversity and complex narrative point of view have also appeared together with the changes in the relationship between the form of viewpoint (personal narrator) and the actual organization of viewpoint (how the narrator sets the distance with the story).

3.2.1. First-person narrator

The Vietnames medieval chuanqi genre include both the existence of the subjective first-person viewpoint (the narrator is a character in the story) and the objective first-person point of view (the narrator stands out of the story)

3.2.1.1. The first-person narrator as character

Through the way of seeing the world according to the eyes of a character, reproducing the reality not only by external observation, but also from internal description, Le Thanh Tong with *Thanh Tong di thao* began for a new narrative form, and non-traditional medieval prose. The integration of the two functions: narrator - who sets narrative and characters - who act in the story helped writers mixed his own story and the story of the contemporary world; objective narative glance and subjective feelings which he had ever experienced in the past. The narative experience of Le Thanh Tong is used less in the later the chuanqi genre. The narative organization in which the narrator is also the first-person narrator, then tells their experiences is almost absent, only a single presence in *Van nang tieu su* with *Giac mong non Thien*. The medieval chuanqi writers also tested the informal narrative forms with different models from *Ta truyen, Su ky* which were set up, but not sustained generally.

3.2.1.2. The first-person narrator as witness

The narrator confesses universally I/we in the medieval the chuanqi genre in the second half of the 18th-19th centuries. However, compared to the story of Le Thanh Tong, this model has clear differences. By the way of rejecting the combination between the narrator and character words; the first-person narrator in this period almost do not appear in character, primary or secondary, central or peripheral, owners of action or witnesses in the text. There are fraudulent exchanges between the personal narrator and the selected viewpoint, since the first-person narrator is not synonymous with an insider's point of view. The first-person pronoun is emphasized as a way in which the narrator confirms any certain relationship between ourselves and

the story, in fact it confirms its proven reality. Through the first-person narrator as witness, the medieval chuanqi genre in the latter half of the 18th-19th centuries moved narrator from the third-person to the first-person narrator which is actually just a movement from the unspecific narrator to the specific.

3.2.2. Third-person narrator

Third-person narrator in the Vietnamese medieval chuanqi genre is not a simple model, immutable. If we see this narrator establishing a foothold for observing, describing the world, even establishing the dominated powers in the narrative events, we can get the change of two patterns: the anonymous narrator and survey and evaluate narrator.

3.2.2.1. Anonymous narrator

The anonymous narrator in the Vietnamese medieval chuanqi genre is determined to two limited powers: man who knows all, understands all things and dominates the objects through external parameters as appearance, language, action figures, but not reaching the depth of the inner movements of characters. From *Linh Nam chich quai luc, Thanh Tong di thao, Truyen ky man luc* to *Truyen ky tan pha*, the narrator often considers the world in perspective unlimited omniscience. He does not just stand out of the observation and tells the current story, but he also penetrates the spirit of the character and simulates the feeling of characters which they underwent and faced with the special situations. Not at all the stories, the narrator discovers humanbeings in those two aspects, looks at the reality with inherent appearance or appearance is felt by the characters. However, in general, he often does not accept his role of the outside observer. The advantage of the omniscient narrator was not inherited by the authors of the chuanqi genre in the second half of the 18th-19th centuries. The anonymous narrators here always limited themselves. He simply paid attention to the action and the content was out of the narrator. He prefered believing in great visual cognitive to sharing and understanding. The objective point of view without showing emotion and caring about other people's feelings of the third person narrator has a close relationship with the simple and ordinary narrative trend in the later stage of the chuanqi genre. The corporeality - transparency - regardless of the authenticity reality and the absence of the narrator are the ways in which a chuanqi writer maximizes distance between the narrator and the story.

3.2.2.2. Narrators survey and evaluate

If the narrator is anonymous, the role of a narrative and a judge are separated into two categories. In comparison to the model with independent narrators, it is opposite. It means that the role of a narrative and a judge are identical to each other. Narrators survey and evaluate the narrative paradigm, which helps chuanqi writers reach the goal: making reader closer to the fictional feelings of a credible reality that the main narrator is the first verified one. In *Truyen ky tan pha* and the previous works, the characters would be chart of the reality of the story. In *Cong du tiep ky* and the later works, it is given to the narrator. After the story is told, the narrator spends a certain amount of time on studying the evidence, the continuation or traces of it at the present like a way of connecting narrative documents with real life, stories and people not only in the past but nowadays as well. The narrator will not hesitate to express his feelings in addition to the role of the narrator, he is also concurrently responsible for expressing his attitudes, thinking about the represented reality.

3.3. Plot structure according to artistic language

One outstanding feature of the artistic language in the chuanqi genre is a combination between the form of languages and that mode of expression of genres. Besides storytelling prose, the chuanqi genre has many other forms like poems, ode, funeral oration, parallel sentences,… However, through the observation of the development of the Vietnamese medieval chuanqi genre, the combination of various forms of genre is not sustained. It increasingly tends to shift from pluralism to unitary form.

3.3.1. From the mixed forms of artistic language

From *Linh Nam chich quai luc, Thanh Tong di thao* to *Truyen ky man luc* and *Truyen ky tan pha*, the imprint of the Chinese chuanqi tales is reflected not only on the story’s tip, character’s tip, but also clearly in the form of a combination of prose: in adition to prose, there are aslo ode, funeral oration, parallel sentences,… and especially poetry. All the problems of life can be realized in the chuanqi genre when man conveys them by poetry, words,... However, this kind of language has particularly advantages of expressing the inner life of the character. Lyrical elements and characteristics of poetic language connect the speaker and the listener quickly. Besides, more "sensitive" problems are exposed. Gaps in psychological problems, the lack

of monologue in chuanqi language will also be offset somewhat by the form of poetry, ca, phú,.. which the writers created and transformed into the character's spokesman. This is an important reason for poetic language to exist in the structure of chuanqi prose and for an aspect which will create the multifaceted beauty of the art form of this genre.

3.3.2. … to the tendency to use a unique prose

"Poetry aesthetic" - what makes the widely spread of the chuanqi genre from the second half of the 18th century there has been a clear change. It is the tendency to find a simple style of writing along with main concerns for foreign people, the unity between people's thought and action, between the ideas and the reality that chuanqi writers in the second half of the eighteenth century cut of the non-prose expression and expanded the character's image and the storyline as well. The disadvantage of poetic and lyrical language is not only reflected in the fact that they no longer present directly in the narrative, but also that they are limited in scope and functional expressions. The poems are rarely shown by the language style of characters. They are usually formed so that the narrators evaluate and summarize. In terms of both the method and the value of expression, poetry is almost not different from prose.

Conclusion of Chapter 3

Based on the implemented methods and connection of events; the method of setting the narrative point of view and the mode of artistic luanguage, the chuanqi genre are continuous continuations and constant changes. From multi-faceted to single, from complex to simple, from omniscient to not omniscient, from inheriting the traditional model to expanding categories,... they are the major changes in the plot structure from *Truyen ky tan pha* or earlier and from *Cong du tiep ky* onwards.

Chapter 4
VIETNAMESE MEDIEVAL CHUANQI GENRE IN TERMS OF CHARACTER CREATION

4.1. The types of character

The world of chuanqi characters can be divided into two main groups: the fantasy characters and earthly characters. The presence of two types of characters demonstrates clearly the realistic portrait in the

status of the virtual and real invasion, which deeply consists of their own imprints of the chuanqi genre.

4.1.1. Fantastic characters

Fantasy character is also called for a surreal character with mystical capacity and strange traits. Based on the rational perspective, this type of character absolutely does not exist in real life. In terms of origin, fantasy characters in the chuanqi genre are included in two groups: characters with the supernatural origin (the past has no relation with the real life); characters come from the earth (they are human in the past), because of a variety of reasons, they actively joined the reincarnation or passively the fantasy world and then they are present in the works as the embodiment of the virtual world. The appearance of fantastic characters just indicates brightly their role in the relationship with the human. As a result, it is possible to divide them into two groups: the virtual characters associated with the human beings; fantastic characters with less connection to real life.

4.1.1.1. The fantastic characters associated with the human beings

This group of characters connected to human beings to form the mode of presence, the mode of portrait for themselves. They can appear as ***a tripper in the earth***, then lead people to the beginning of hidden realities by the way of filling a dream, revealing secrets or chances for them in the future... At higher levels, ***fantastic characters can be involved in the real life***. In terms of impacts on human life, this intervention takes place in two opposite directions: either it breaks the peace and happiness of human beings ; or it establishes a stable new order and justice on the troubled implementation and many uncertainties. Fantastic characters have effect to human beings by not only expressing the disruption but also enstrusting aspiration in *Thanh Tong di thao*. They also play an important role in *Truyen ky man luc*, are overshadowed in *Truyen ky tan pha* and in the latter half of the 18th-19th centuries, they were quite clearly diminished. Hazards to humans are no longer in the majority of names in the virtual world and the power of the virtual characters will not have many opportunities to express in the real life. The fantastic characters coming in the world not only stand out of or ***stand on the human beings to seek solutions for their existence***. The chuanqi genre provided the readers and the witness with changes in position between

characters and people's behaviors in small world. The journey of the fantastic characters to the world is not always in actively selected. Sometimes, it is associated with the explained derises, dreams about the communication, needs for the help. It shows the breakdown between the model of fantastic characters - powerful characters, between the virtual world - the wonderful one.

4.1.1.2. The fantasy characters with less connection to the real life

Besides fantastic characters chose the earth to exist, took the meetings between people as a chance of representing their power or coming their happiness true, in the chuanqi tales, there was aslo fantastic characters having little connection with human beings (little or no dealings with Humans). However, they often account for a small rate and do not have an important role in the narrative progresses. It shows that focusing on the virtual world is not the purpose of chuanqi writers.

4.1.2. Earthly characters

It is not fairy or demons but humankind in everyday life that is the inspiration of chuanqi writers in conquering both the real and virtual world. The relationship between human beings and the virtual world will reveal to the reader a lot about themselves and the world they live.

4.1.2.1. Earthly characters have contact with the virtual world

Firtly, ***human plays a role in testing the existence of fantastic characters in theirs real life***. To neutralize those doubts about the authenticity of the unreal paintings in the life, chuanqi writers created a system of witness. They do not participate in the main event, and are arranged in the outside position of observation or auxiliary. In this position, people with supernatural forces remain anonymous relationship. It means that they share the lifespace with each other but do not affect the fate of another one. Besides, ***human can make the trip to the virtual space***. The adventure to the exotic countries of people associated with the reconstruction in terms of space by chuanqi writers. The people followed in two ways: directly - moving on the real ways like the road to go, the river..., indirectly - actually blurring boundaries and surreal worlds with the invasion of day dreaming. According to direct way, the connection between humans and the metaphysical world can be made a deliberate way, can also occur randomly or by chance. In deliberate way, the virtual world was created for the purpose

as the second face of the real world, for a metaphor for society and then people will seek better understanding of the nature of the real world, and solutions for the crisis in the real world. *Thanh Tong di thao, Truyen ky man luc, Truyen ky tan pha* built the virtual space in this way. Besides the intentional trip, there are also random meetings. Motif "touching foot on the strange world" in fokltales was inherited by chuanqi writers in the latter half of the 18th-19th centuries and used as a way to expand the margin space. The symbol of the virtual space is omitted, they exist only as mysteries that people admit but do not desire to discover.

4.1.2.2. Human do not have contact with the virtual world

Besides the earthly characters who are created on the process of mixing real - virtual, there are plenty of characters representing the real world, their lives without experiencing any unreal experience. In *Thanh Tong di thao*, the number of fantastic characters is somewhat more than the number of earthly characters. To *Truyen ky man luc, Truyen ky tan pha*, the awareness of secular have clearer shape. The existence of the virtual things is no longer be regarded as a truism but it has brought many implieds. Along with the characters existing in virtual- real world, there are characters who do not know and care about the presence of the metaphysical world. The vast majority of them are responsible for secondary role, as background for the presence of the central character. In *Cong du tiep ky*, this model of characters from the secondary position have gradually stepped the narrative center. The fantasy is still part of the concept of Vu Phuong De and writers followed him; but the fantasy experiences are not necessarily required in the life. The human life is still full of uncertainty, but perhaps the writers in the second half of the 18th-19th centuries dealt with them more directly. Therefore, the solutions for these social problems become more realistic.

4.1.2.3. Humankind between two worlds: the real and virtual world

The character is as a bridge linking humans to the virtual world for the first appearance in *Truyen ky man luc*, and then is not maintained in a seamless manner via *Cong du tiep ky, Lan Tri kien van luc, Tang thuong ngau luc* to *Thoai thuc ky van, Hat Dong thu di, Thinh van di luc*. Although the quantity is not much but in a certain extent, they still help the reader visualize the differences in chuanqi writers's perceptions about two real-

virtual worlds through the stages. The invasion of the virtual life is real, but not always well recognized by people. Nguyen Du need this characters as broker to clear the human's mystery. In the chuanqi genre in the latter half of the 18th-19th centuries, characters with the role of brokers can predict the future (mage, fortune tellers, bonze, augur,…) were gradually replaced by functional character who opened and arranged to fate's people (socerer, master of feng shui). Leaving the connection role, sometimes these characters are the main characters in the story.

4.2. Characterization methods in the Vietnamese medieval chuanqi genre

4.2.1. Combination of the real - virtual factor

Features of chuanqi characters is a combination of real and virtual. This combination in the two groups of fantastic characters and earthly characters in two different ways.

4.2.1.1. Making fantastic characters become real, earthly

Firstly, ***combining the real - virtual factor in describing the character's appearance and background.*** Elves, demons - chuanqi writers often describe fantastic characters with human appearance, with origins from the human world. the inherent subjectivity related to virtual ideas are often come back to the origin, then connected to the real facts by the writers. Secondly, ***combining the real - virtual factor in re-existing the characters' life.*** Observing the virtual characters from the secular perspective and taking the characteristics of humans to imagine a metaphysical forces, chuanqi writers believe that fairy, demon also bring human aspirations and limits. In terms of purpose, it is associated with deliberate intention to bring the real world into the virtual world. In terms of the etiology, it stems from a skeptical view of the role metaphysical forces. The behavioral tendencies, secularization towards eliminating the sacred aura around the characters are probably derived from *Linh Nam chich quai luc*. They become a supernatural outlook in *Thanh Tong di thao* and associate with the transformation of realistic problems in *Truyen ky man luc, Truyen ky tan pha*. From *Cong du tiep ky,* chuanqi writers also seem less ambitious planes to carry on virtual worlds. They focus on perceiving the sacred duality of the divine. Divine with human personality, habits and behavior is common portrait of the fantastic character in this stage chuanqi.

A typical format of the realization of fantastic characters in Vietnamese chuanqi genre: ***the fantastic characters choose theirs life - human life***. "Personalization" of supernatural forces so that they stepped down to earth, had the human face, life experiences with love, longing, limitations, loss of human beings is the famous way Le Thanh Tong, Nguyen Du, Doan Thi Diem chose for their tales. Fantastic characters for both human experiences and aspirations are nearly hidden in the chuanqi genre from the second half of the eighteenth century. In observation of the writers, it is the only man in the new reality of life that must undergo the joy, anger, love, hate and have new burdens on the shoulders of the dreams and hidden memories. The kinds of character bearing their fate are real in the daily life and no shadow of the illusion. Obviously, compared with *Thanh Tong di thao, Truyen ky man luc* and *Truyen ky tan pha* - where virtual and real factors are mixed, the virtual and the real is no longer interlocked and invasiveeach other in *Cong du tiep ky, Lan Tri kien van luc, Tang thuong ngau luc*...

4.2.1.2. Making earthly characters becomes extraordinary, miraculous

Besides the tendency to find the real facts to create credibility for characters, chuanqi writers also unites they with virtual details, elements to highlight the values, exaggerate talent and bravery. People are not only seen in the integrated or reciprocal relationship but also turned from the virtual world. ***Unusual origins is the first sign to recognize the difference, exceeding the standard***. Not only that, ***earthly characters's life was also virtualization***. The virtualization of human behavior are done by chuanqi writers in two ways: firstly, describing the re-incarnation process into the virtual world of human; secondly, highlighting the extraordinary capacity, great contribution and strange life of the characters. From the realm of the human world, the journey to the sacred space of the people in the chuanqi genre shows not only the purpose of worship, but also the meaning of incarnation, swap positions. The spatial movement in this aspect is synonymous with changes in serfage. Itinerary this commitment can be seen as not only grace (the human is joined the world of gods), but also a loss (people is deprived of their lives). This tendency brings people closer to the divine world without changing space, fate. The extraordinary cultural, chemical unusual ability and character behavior are diferent directions of

chuanqi writers in the second half 18th-19th centuries. The trends of virtualization usually go along with attempts to endorse the character, which creates a very specific combination for human portraits in the chuanqi genre in the second half of the 18th-19th centuries.

4.2.2. Approaching character's portraits from multiple perspectives

The entire portrait of character in the chuanqi genre is created from observations of many entities: the narrator, the character in the story and the author.

4.2.2.1. The portrait's characters from the narrator's perspective

The narrator not only provides a profile such as names, family circumstances, the home, events in the life but also feel responsible for an assessment of behavioral, the aesthetic nature of the depicted objects. These remarks, the introduction about the personality and qualities, the abilities of characters are seen as the way in which the narrator represents the look, the voice of the individual and asserts himself. Moreover, it attaches the reader to the orientation of receiving image. Chuanqi writers usually do not give readers any right to feel about characters. Through the narrator and at many different levels, they want to dominate, even coordinate the vision and perspective of the recipient in works.

4.2.2.2. The portrait of characters from self-observation

Because of an important role in the reconstruction, the characters of chuanqi genre are self-discovery characters and they expose the inner world of themselve, observe the character and value each other. Chuanqi characters that have not been described as the " owner in itself", are not only completely independent, free from the domination of the narrator but also not the " silent object", lack of self- awareness. By "ego" inner feeling, by the contemplation of their own thoughts, the characters sometimes show the depth that the narrator does not mention. However, humans are seen from the inside, which is not the common denominator of the iconic characters in the chuanqi genre. In the story about the theme of privacy, personal life and the psychological evolution of the characters in each situation are aslo mentioned. In the narrative towards moral themes, the action and speech are still considered as a major aspect of expression of the people.

Chuanqi writers not only let their character confide himself, but also observe and assess characters through the eyes of other characters. The

collated methods of the character creation are deployed in two ways: consensus and contradiction. ***Consensus*** is the point of view of the other characters in the same direction with the narrator. In other words, the narrator looks characters through the perspective of the public in the work. ***In the contrary to this***, in terms of contracdiction, each character is based on experience, the personal conception and the assessment of other characters according to their own standards. From the contrary point of view at the primitive level, the reader begins to hear the polyphonic voice of character.

4.2.2.3. The portrait of characters: evaluation of the author - reader

Sometimes, the viewpoint of the chuanqi narrator have not correspond to the awareness of the author. When the message which is communicated from the narrator has a certain dissonance with the writer's thoughts, they often set himself apart from the story, and then express their opinions independently (comments section). In those moments, stories and iconic characters from the story appear as objects to enjoy, while the author is presented as a reader in order to express thoughts on the products they create. Prejudices or assertion that the author attributes to the character is essentially the result of a way of reading. The viewpoint of the authors - the reader can be considered as an information channel in indecating the imagery in the work. At the same time, it helps the reader gain a sketch of the author.

4.2.3. The expression of character's personality and fates through created situation

4.2.3.1. Situation changes the character's life and fate

Creating situations associated with fluctuations in the life, the character's destiny expresses hopes for life-changing dreams and fears of the chuanqi authors before the unpredictable reality that humans are engaged. The trend of creating situations around fates as a way to seek opportunities and happiness in *Linh Nam chich quai luc, Thanh Tong di thao*, a form of expression of the uncertain faces in *Truyen ky man luc* also continued to fade in *Truyen ky tan pha* and later. In the second half of the 18th-19th centuries, through a special group of celebrity stories, readers are still experiencing the nature motif which rearranged, modified, swapped for human destiny, like disclosured mistery, made the dream,... However, this presence contributes to explain the root causing abnormal existence rather than express the problems related to human's destiny.

4.2.3.2. Situation reveals the character's nature

In a complex world, chuanqi writers has started to pay attention to the diference between appearance and nature of human, the inadequacy between potential and reality. The character creation is no longer a process of reproduction of the completed image, unchanging nature, it is associated with the narrator who has not only led but also co-operated with the readers to identity portraits. Creating situations in which the nature and characters are revealed is a new trend in the chuanqi genre. Through this type of situation, the writer aims at two targets: exposuring character, studying the characters freely, not under any pressure. Situations which reveal the nature of the character are usually held in the narrative in favor of exploring the social relations and human approach to recognize that situation.

4.2.3.3. Situation proves the character's ability and bravery

Chuanqi writers not only give a sentimental look when approaching reality, but also believe in a full of confidence with the role of the human world. These situations which create the context revealing the human talent and bravery are held in many forms, can be divided into four groups: people suppress natural phenomena; Human drivers miraculous powers; man with god's competition (arguments, theoretical and competitive strength, confrontation); man show his capacity between communities. The connection between humans and the virtual world does not stop at the passive reception from the human beings, but also a chance for them to assert their position. Besides the confrontation with supernatural forces in the second half from the 18th century, the trend of creating scenarios is also a way to show the people's worth in the real life. The portrait of people is moving away from the resonance real - as well as a modified noticeable in the world of chuanqi tales at this stage.

Conclusion of Chapter 4

The world of characters and the measures of character creations in the Vietnamese medieval chuanqi genre are really rich and varied. Under the observation of the chuanqi writer, human portraits and the world they live in do not stand. They always change through the journey time, from the type of character to the character creation method. The transformation of the chuanqi tales in the latter half of the 18th-19th centuries is essential to the reborn genre, continue to meet the aspiration of decoding the human's reality at that time.

CONCLUSION

In comparision with other genres in medieval narratives, the chuanqi genre have a rich history and a complicated appearance. As a genre is "transplanted" from China but deeply rooted in the life of national literature, the process of formation and development of Vietnam Chuanqi is the process of receiving many factors (achievements of the foreign literature, traditional cultural elite of the country), as well as the processes of innovation, continous creativity.

1. Talking to the first chuanqi works, we should mention two books *Linh Nam chich quai luc* and *Nam Ong mong luc*. Then, many chuanqi tales are born, many new achievements are created. However, in gerneral, the chuanqi genre do not go beyond two methods created by the writer of *Linh Nam chich quai luc, Nam Ong mong luc*: fiction and fictional; copies of reality and fiction. *Truyen Ha O Loi* and *Truyen Gieng Viet* in *Linh Nam chich quai luc* began the chuanqi genre from *Thanh Tong di thao*, through *Truyen ky man luc* and *Truyen ky tan pha*, while the *Cong du tiep ky* and the later chuanqi works returned and developed the narrative models like *Nam Ong mong luc.*

2. By plot structure, it can be seen that the chuanqi narative has had remarkable achievements, contributions to the development of ethnic prose. These methods of implementation and connection between events are used flexibly, which makes up the rich storyline model and is compatible with reflected range, with awareness and perceptions about the world of the writer: there is simple plot - the plot is complicated; the plot has been created on the basis on the natural order of events - the plot is formed from the shuffling process and the inherent rhythm events,... The relationship between the narrative point of view and the narrator have also been established in several ways. Besides the traditional point of view and the model of traditional narrator (objective viewpoint, the narrator brings a point of view), the form of first-person narrative imbued with personal subjectivity, selected point of view aslo appears. The chuanqi writer has tried to find new ways of expression for his narrative discourse. Along with prose, a variety of forms such as poems, ode, funeral oration, parallel sentences,... also are integral to the chuanqi language, which will increase

the strength and ability to dominate the reality of genre. Through plot structure, not only the creative role of chuanqi writers is confirmed but the process of mobilization of this type of writing is aslo revealed. From the traditional narrative pattern with typical *Truyen ky man luc*, the chuanqi genre in the second half of the 18th-19th centuries aslo changed dramatically. Instead of telling stories in a way the author goes with the character through many events, chuanqi writers in this stage often choose to explore ourselves at the moment it is present, rather than accompany the history of a life, a way, they tend to focus on a few situations attended characters. Narrator abandon the world approach in perspective unlimited omniscience, they keep their distance or absolute, to refuse to connect to the felt, sensed object's narrative, or allowed himself judgment, assessment, orientation sensing the reader through foreign topic comments. Reductive narrative trend with the policy wording morph from unitary pluralism makes the process be speeded narrative but parallel to that, the color of the lyrical genre is therefore also clearly diminished strokes. The chuanqi genre actually had a new look since the second half of the eighteenth century.

3. Character creation is the process of reproducing the human figure in literature, it is associated with the concept of the human, the human approach of the writer. The world of characters in the chuanqi genre is rich and complex, with a full range of components, class, caste, gender and habits, dignity. Seeing from the actual relationship - virtual origin and presence status, we can divide the characters in the chuanqi genre into two groups: the virtual characters, and the characters in the real-life and they represent two worlds: the realm of unreality and the realm of reality. We do not separate individually but connect with each other, even integrate each other. In the structure of chuanqi characters and in the world in which they engage; the combination between the real world and the virtual one is the most striking feature. Although two trends do not start from a point but reach the same destination: they help people identify themselves. Compared to other forms of medieval narrative, character creation arts in the chuanqi genre has had remarkable achievements. Besides the people’s appearance, human’s inner feeling is also concerned. The review of characters from many points of view, situations in which people

express themselves and expose their fate is the successful way of character creations of chuanqi writers. Through the world of characters, the differences in the picture of reality in chuanqi in two phases (the half of the 18th century and earlier and the half of the 18th century onwards) are clearly expressed. The miraculous in chuanqi has been a change, from the fantasy to the strange.

4. After the first chuanqi tales appear in *Linh Nam chich quai luc, Nam Ong mong luc*, Vietnamese medieval chuanqi is divided into two development phases: a phases by Le Thanh Tong and Nguyen Du develops appearance; another one by Vu Phuong De and the authors followed him explore, create portraits. *Truyen ky tan pha* is a mediator, it has not only followed the traditional style but also tried to innovate according to the contemporary literature. However, in terms of comprehensive review, the work of Doan Thi Diem still belongs to the first journey on the path of chuanqi movement. In comparision to *Thanh Tong di thao, Truyen ky man luc, Truyen ky tan pha*, writers had made the chuanqi appearance perfect. It appears like a category of the national literature, as well as literary genre of many East - Asian countries. In the trend of literary renewal in the 18th-19th centuries in terms of concept and form, there are clear innovation in the chuanqi genre at this stage. The views about the world are still accepted by convinced and unreal factors. However, the writers at this stage did not continue the caarer of Le Tong, Nguyen Du and Doan Thi Diem. They turned into a completely different direction: to materialize and nationalize the chuanqi genre thoroughly. The narrative is reconstructed from phenomena in the life. The dependence on the traditional style is loosened, thus the diversity of categories is also expanded.

5. Studying *The Vietnamese medieval chuanqi genre (from plot structure and character creation),* we can see rich contributions of the chuanqi genre to the national literature. Within the thesis, there are many issues related to the subject has not been addressed or resolved as comparison the evolution of Vietnamese medieval chuanqi and these genre in China, North Korea, Japan; recognizing the similarities and differences between the chuanqi with other fatastic genres; studying the influence of the medieval chuanqi to Vietnamese modern literature,... thesis writers hope to continue in the next project.

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