



A Contrastive Study of Religion Metaphors Between English Folk Songs and Yao Folk Songs

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Abstract

Both English folk songs and Yao folk songs come from the folk and belong to a kind of folk literature. Through the comparison of religious metaphors in English folk songs and Yao Folk Songs, and by exploring the root of the formation of their respective national characteristics, we can find out that cultural differences as well as cultural similarities exist in them although Yao folk songs are not the representatives of all Chinese ballads. Since the source domains and target domains used in these two folk songs are generally familiar to us, their religious metaphors give us a hint that early human beings had ever faced the common social problems, and they had similar lifestyles and almost the same characteristics of human’s thinking. Undoubtedly, this research can help us roughly to learn about the historical track of human being’s childhood and follow the trail of their religious thoughts.

Key words: Religion; Metaphor; English Folk Songs; Yao Folk Songs

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INTRODUCTION

In the past, people tended to regard religion to be

antithetical to literature, however, if we examine closely, folk literature in the world is in fact more or less interwoven with religion in its development process under their mutual influence, they are actually in one unity. Religion metaphors from English folk songs and Yao folk songs show that, metaphors exist widely in our daily life, not only in human’s language, but also in their thoughts and actions. As Lakoff (1993, p.225) and Johnson (1987, p.23) point out: for most people, metaphor is a tool of poetic imagination and rhetorical decoration, an abnormal rather than ordinary language. As both English folk songs and Yao folk songs are early forms of folk literature, reflecting the cultural thoughts of the two ethnic groups of that time, religion metaphors are widely used in them shows that our early humans, in order to obtain the necessary necessities of life under the condition of low productivity, had learned to live by groups—a lifestyle of collective labor and collective hunting, in order to make up for their lack of power, they had to turn the attention to the supernatural forces, which led to their nature worship, totem worship and ancestor worship, etc.. However, the Yao ethnic group’s religion as a whole is a multi-religious worship of witch, Taoism and ancestor worship with Taoism as the mainstay, totally different from the British people who mainly embrace Christianity. Therefore, exploring the similarities and differences of the religion metaphors between English folk songs and Yao folk songs is of great help not only in understanding their composing purpose but their true meaning.

1. RELIGIOUS METAPHORS IN YAO FOLK SONGS

The famous German religious historian Harnack Adoif von Harnack emphasized that it was not a serious academic attitude for a person to study the history of religion neglecting the ethnic group’s language and

culture, for it would lead to only a partial understanding of the religion. As we know, witchcraft is one of the earliest social practices, and the incantation, as an important part of witchcraft, is the earliest poetry. This incantation which adopts desire to dominate nature is prior to the cries that accompany labor. Some commentators therefore believe that the original poetry resources of later ages are from two ways, one is the original incantation, the other is the poetry that develops from the voice of labor; the former dominates the sacred realm, so that the sacrificial words, ritual songs and folk songs of later generations possibly develop from the primitive incantations, the latter dominates the secular sphere, so that the content is increasingly enriched by the development of social life. Therefore, the poetry from the two sources often interweave with each other. For example, there are secular contents in ritual songs, witchcraft psychology and religious concepts in labor songs and love songs. "Poetry originated in labor and religion." (Lu, 1925, p.4) Some scholars, having done further researches into the relationship between literature and religion, hold that "a sacrificial altar is a literary altar", "the primitive religious thoughts are the primitive literary thoughts, and the primitive religious activities are the primitive literary activities", "an original wizard is an original singer", these viewpoints now are still controversial in academic circles. It is obvious that certain customs are the products of certain social and historical development stages, which are closely related to the living environments, religious beliefs, psychological states, thoughts and feelings of the people of all ethnic groups; they have long been the important parts of the people's social life of their own. Once their customs were reflected in the folk songs, they would form their own characteristics. Actually, as early as the primitive society, folk songs had been composed, and they fell roughly three categories, there were songs of reflecting religion, such as funeral songs, divinatory tunes, hunting tunes, songs of promoting a monk, song of slaughtering a cow, etc. and songs of reflecting the local customs and practices in an ethnic areas, such as songs of drinking wine, songs of drinking tea, songs of building a house, songs of welcoming the new year, etc. and songs of reflecting the custom of marriage, such as wedding songs, songs of welcoming a bride, wedding speeches, banquet songs, etc. Now that all of these folk songs had been playing an important part in their daily life, they could undoubtedly show us a colorful picture of an ethnic group.

For the inhabitants of Yao ethnic groups living in the Nanling Mountainous corridor, after a busy time of the spring ploughing, summer planting, and autumn harvesting, they would welcome a time to take a good break in October, for in the Chinese lunar calendar this period is a relatively relaxing season. It is also in this harvest season behind a hard-working that the Yao ethnic groups meet their traditional festival of Pan Wang Festival

to offer sacrifices to their ancestors, activities like brewing wine, cleaning houses, killing chickens and ducks, making Ciba (a Chinese food) become necessary. Also, on the sacrifice day, men and women, the old and the young, dressed in festive costumes, come to the Panwang Temple one after another to celebrate the holy day. When the time comes, they would offer sacrifices to the Panwang under the leadership of the clan's elder in the village, singing the Panwang song, dancing with the long drums, honoring the merits of the ancestors, and singing the praises of their fighting spirit with the purpose of celebrating the harvest, rewarding the protection of their King Pan etc. As the early records in classics of Gan Bao's *Search For Gods* in the Jin dynasty, Liu Yuxi's *Barbarian Song* in the Tang dynasty, Zhou Qifei's *Endorsement Out Of The Ling Mountains* in the Song dynasty, those activities had been described in details. What's more, according to the record in *Endorsement Out Of The Ling Mountains*, on October 1st of lunar calendar, the Yao people in a whole village ought to hold an assembly in front of the temple to offer sacrifices to King Pan, and after that, they would dance together in groups of men and women, which is called stamping and rocking. Thus it can be inferred that the custom of celebrating Pan Wang Festival has been a long history among the Yao ethnic groups.

In the course of a long intermingling, the Yao ethnic groups had been interacting and fusing constantly with the local Hans and other Yao's, and evolving into a different vernacular group that ran a forest economy and also engaged in farming and commerce. With an early acceptance of the Chinese "Enlightenment," their cultural practices and religious beliefs were very similar to one of the Yao's branches who once lived in the flat land, worshiping gods, believing in witchcraft and Yao's Taoism preaches, and with a "Taoist master" or "Master" in every village, they would sing constantly on usual days in addition to singing songs on festivals, but generally, people from adjacent villages would sing songs in an antiphonal style while people in the same village would not. Of course, at this time, they would not only sing songs to tease the opposite to entertain each other, but sing songs to be pleased and to choose a spouse, no matter whether the opposite was married or not. The contents of the songs were all-inclusive, and in each village there was a "singer master", but singing spot and singing time were often unlimited. In the Yao's sacred scripture of "Book of Pan Huang • Songs Of Liu Yue • Entering The Temple Of Fujiang", it reads:

King Pan was the first to be born in the world,
And his birth place was in Fujiang.
King Pan was the first to be born in the world,
And his birth place was in the west.
King Pan wore a flat crown on his head,
And the crown wings erected to the sky.
King Pan was the first to be born in the world,
And his birth place was in Fujiang.

King Pan was the first to be born in the world,
And his birth place was in the west.
King Pan was born in the temple of Fujiang,
And he got thirteen pairs of seals on hand.
King Pan was born in the temple of the west,
He had thirteen thousands of seals on hand.
King Pan was the first to be born in the world,
And two stone toads were seen carved in a river.
King Pan was the first to be born in the world,
And two stone toads were seen carved by the river.
King Pan was seated there three and a half years,
And Stone snails came out of the two stone toads.
King Pan was seated there three and a half years,
And red lotus came out of the two stone toads.
King Pan was the first to be born in the world,
And his birth place was in Fujiang.
King Pan was the first to be born in the world,
And his birth place was in the west.
The Holy King was the first to be born in the world,
And his mother was gone when he was born.
The Holy King was born without clothes to wear,
And he covered his body with gold bones found on the road.
The Holy King was born without clothes to wear,
And he shaded his body with gold bones found on the road.
King Pan was born in Fujiang then,
And two golden boys were sitting in two rows.
King Pan was born in the west then,
Two golden boys were sitting in both sides.
Purple ridges were in the sight from tall buildings,
And dragon sons were making up in the Jiang village.
Purple ridges were in the sight from tall buildings,
And dragon sons were making up in Jiang Zhou.
Pan Huang gave birth to a pair of girls in a year,
And they travelled in and out the village all the year round.
Pan Huang gave birth to a pair of girls in a year,
And they travelled here and there all the year round.
There were six daughters of King Pan's then,
They were married to six golden lads with different surnames.
Divided into twelve surnames of the Yao's,
They carried on the family line until today.
The jade maiden combed her hair orderly,
But the virgin maiden combed her hair messy.
The jade maiden combed into a Buddha-like,
And she must be King Pan's beloved daughter.
The jade maiden combed into a Buddha-like,
She followed the Emperor Pan to come down the earth.
The master must have something to ask the King to come,
Then they specially invited King Pan to their village.
The first call passed on to the Fujiang temple,
The second call saw he had arrived in front of the altar.
He said "Good Luck" to them when he arrived,
Then they were lucky to meet the holy Emperor with his five queens.

In *Book of Pan Wang*, the emperor's great achievement of creating the world was praised like this:

King Pan was the first to have schemes of livelihood,
His first planting of ramie had bloomed with leaves.
What a good price at market the ramie was,
And it would be sold two dollars a pair of scales.
King Pan was the first to have schemes of livelihood,
Bigger leaves than flowers came out from the tender sprout.
The slender ramie was not what it should be,
But the flowers were too emaciated to be bright.
King Pan was the first to have schemes of livelihood,

He made a weaving with ramie as planned.
Thin ramie thread was woven on the loom soon,
And good texture with good picture was on the cloth surface.
King Pan was the first to have schemes of livelihood,
With schemes he set up a high loom to weave.
Thin cloth came out of the loom after that,
And orderly yarn was from three pieces of jointed cloth.
King Pan was the first to have schemes of livelihood,
With schemes he set up a high loom to weave.
Thin cloth came out of the loom after that,
And from generation to generation they wore embroidered clothes.
Thin cloth came out of the loom after that,
And his offspring were not worried about livelihood.
King Pan was the first to have schemes of livelihood,
With schemes he wove out a sheet of cloth.
He wove cloth with embroidered patterns on the loom,
And he packed it into a case to prepare for clothing.
King Pan was the first to plant ramie,
And he was the first to wear silk garment.
King Pan was the first to plant ramie,
And he was the first to wear silk garment.
The ramie grew well under King Pan's care,
And King Tang was satisfied with his garment.
The ramie grew well under King Pan's care,
Putting on the ramie clothes King Tang was brighter.
King Pan was the first to have schemes of livelihood,
With schemes he figured out the season of spring.
As the carp and the yellow dragon knew well each other,
They came to meet together at this time.
King Pan was the first to have schemes of livelihood,
Thanks to his schemes the spring came orderly.
Carp made love leisurely at the bottom of water,
And they were waiting for the rain with five thunders.
King Pan was the first to have schemes of livelihood,
With schemes he had fixed up his plow and his rake.
But before the plow and the rake were ready,
The grain had sprouted in the paddy fields below the house.
King Pan was the first to have schemes of livelihood,
Under his schemes the Qingming (a solar term) came orderly.
King Pan was the first to have schemes of livelihood,
With schemes he figured out the season of Qingming.
Thanks to his contribution there was enough rain for crops,
And the early rice seedlings in fields grew higher and higher.
Thanks to his contribution there was enough rain for crops,
And the early rice seedlings in fields grew greener and greener.
King Pan was the first to have schemes of livelihood,
With schemes he had fixed up his plowshare.
King Pan was the first to have schemes of livelihood,
With schemes he had fixed up his plow and his rake.
The rat king swam across the sea to steal rice seeds,
The dragon king carried water to spray on the rice seedling heads.
The rat king swam across the sea to steal rice seeds,
The dragon king carried water to spray on the rice seedling flowers.
Lu Ban was a cute and real skilled craft man,
He was cute enough to do more invention.
Lu Ban was a cute and real skilled craft man,
Not only cute but much cleverer he was.
In large states did skilled craft men could occur,
In the distance did travel the sounds of King Pan's cutting.
In large states did skilled craft men could occur,
In the distance did travel the sounds of King Pan's sawing.
When Liu San composed the songs with melody,

He told the ordinary people to pass them on to offspring.
When Liu San composed the songs with melody,
He told the ordinary people to pass them on to the world.

Because the Yao ethnic groups had been living in nature for generations and depended much on nature for food and clothing, they tried to seek for the protection of the supernatural power in spirit and thought, so the religion inherent among them was the belief that all things had a spirit and were dedicated to the gods, such as “Mountain God”, “Water God”, “Kitchen God”, “Land God”, which led to the arising of “Polytheistic Culture” in this ethnic groups. Besides, they had formed the habit of using folk songs to demonstrate religious activities, and adopted different content of the divine songs to express them in different religious situations, such as exorcising ghosts, worshiping heaven and earth, offering sacrifices to the dead, praying for god’s will, praying for the prosperity of poultry, and an abundant harvest of grain. These religious ceremonies were mainly directed by the elder of the village, and assisted by the masters, whose responsibilities were mainly to preside over the sacrifice, marriage and funeral rituals and exorcising ghosts. As King Pan has been regarded by the legendary ancestor of the Yao ethnic groups, the activities of “Offering sacrifices to King Pan” are very grand; among them the “Song of Pan Wang” expresses the Yaos’ mythology, history, politics, economy, culture and art, social life and so on.

Bowing in front of the master to congratulate the honored guest,
They thanked him for his brilliant Taoist rituals.
As the master led them to pass the saint’s mourning hall,
They had come in front of the God following him.
As they covered seven-star steps,
They had walked past nine states and ten palace.
As they passed the merit and virtue desk,
They met all the new officials in heaven and hell.
——The great lyrics of King Pan

From this folk song, true content of the process of “Xingchao (officials in feudal times go to court)” is vividly reflected. According to the Chinese historical documentary records, the family of Pangu is closely linked with the Pan Kingdom as well as the Pan-based ethnic groups, which is still the largest family name in the Yao’s today, and they all agreed that they were offspring of King Pan. Every year, on October 16th of the lunar calendar, the Yao ethnic groups would celebrate the birthday of King Pan by piously dancing and chanting the *Great Songs of Pan Wang* in order to cherish the memory of him. In the song of *Fairy Lady Liu’s Going for an Outing*, they would sing:

Fairy Lady Liu in the region of Fu Chuan,
She did bless the neighbors all around.
She presented an memorial paper to Emperor Yu,
Resulting in the good land fortune and the flourishing
population.

Obviously, they had regarded fairy lady Liu as the god

who would protect them peaceful and wealthy. On King Pan’s Day, they would sing again:

Since October 16th of the lunar calendar was King Pan’s Day,
The time they had to show respect to the King of the year.
Living in the prosperous land they offered sacrifices to the Land
King,
So divine light reflected on heaven and earth in Fu Chuan was
seen.

2. RELIGIOUS METAPHORS IN ENGLISH FOLK SONGS

Religion is not only a kind of historical phenomenon, but a kind of social ideology, it is a distorted and illusory reaction to natural and social forces in People’s consciousness in which supernatural powers were trusted and worshiped. These religious beliefs also partly constrain the behavior of the Yao’s, leading them to believe that goodness was rewarded and sin met with punishment. Religion comes into being because the phenomenon of people’s dreaming causes the concept of soul to form, which leads to the concept of “All things have spirit” from other natural things. Archeological research shows that the primitive religion of human beings’ was to deify animals, or zoolatry. The emergence of the concept of gods had a direct relationship with the lack of subject and object consciousness, or the thinking mode of judging things by themselves based on the intuition. Due to the lack of subject and object consciousness, in the mind of the early humans’, mankind and all natural things were the same and in one unity. It is at the level of the consciousness of the unity of all things that humans have developed their own mental sprout. (Zhao, 2007, p.203) So it can be inferred that the commonality of the religious world and the symbolic form lie in the fact that they not only have the same binary opposite structure patterns, but also have the same transcendental features. In the myths between eastern culture and western culture, we can still see many images of gods and monsters as animals or similar animal-like monsters. In China, the creator gods of Fu Xi and Nüwa were depicted as a figure with human faces and serpent bodies. In Egypt, Hathor, the god of love and joy, was a cow. And in Greece, Tyche, the goddess of fate, was depicted as one with human body and a bird’s wings. There are many examples in the English language of the animal-worshiping “marks”, such as Anubis, an Egyptian god; his office was to take the souls of the dead before the judge of the infernal regions. He was represented with a human body and a jackal’s head. (Qin, 2002, p.23) Other examples as follow:

10H. 18 ‘O God bless my father the king,
And I wish the same to my mother the queen.
10H. 19 ‘My sister Jane she tumbled me in,

---10H: *The Twa Sisters*

The ballad *The Twa Sisters* tells a story of a knight who wooed the elder sister when he was meeting with the two sisters, but ended up with falling in love with the younger sister and wooing her, causing the elder sister so jealous that she drowned her younger sister dead. The hero in this ballad prayed to god to bless his parents, here, god is an omnipotent force beyond nature. Now we know that this kind of metaphor not only exists on the basis of similarity, but also exists on the basis of proximity (metonymy in fact). (Zhao, 2007, p.206) Also, this is how Aristotle interpreted a metaphor: "A metaphor is formed by applying the name of belonging to something else to this thing, and this transfer can be from species concept to genus concept and vice versa, or from genus to genus, and so on and so forth." (Aristotle, trans. by Luo, 1986, chap.20)

47B.2 'God make you safe and free, fair maid,
God make you safe and free!
'My father's lord o nine castles,
My mother she's lady ower three,

—47B: Proud Lady Margaret

The ballad *Proud Lady Margaret* tells a story of a man who came to the castle of the arrogant heroine Margaret and made wooing to her. She often criticized him for his inappropriate dressing, which made him lack a gentleman's grace. In other versions, he gave her riddles, such as "What is the first thing in a Flower?" (primrose), and at last, she accepted his dressing mold. He revealed that he was the ghost of her brother, and sometimes she said that she would accompany with him while he had to forbid it because he would kill her. He told her that he had just come to curb her insolence. From this ballad, we can see that the internal relationship between religion and metaphor is most directly and widely embodied in religious doctrines and religious classics, in which metaphor is the most basic way of expression. (He, 2004, pp.79-82)

The Bible holds that god is the unique and almighty creator of all things on the earth. The Christian god is mainly regarded as the representative of god in western religions because he is more perfect than any other gods in the world. In the above ballad, the supernatural power of god is borrowed to ensure safety and freedom, it is a metaphor for the allure of god's omnipotence. As Cuthill said, metaphor "means this concept consists only of that one which has a conscious thought referring to the content of the name, so long as the content of that thought is in some way similar to that of this." Here one must think of the principle of substitution, which may be called the basic principle of linguistic and mythological 'metaphor', all mythological ideas are governed by this principle. (Cassirer, 1988, p.109) Therefore, in the broad sense, metaphors, or the internal structures of metaphor are consistent and overlapping.

47B. 28 'When ye're in the gude church set,

The gowd pins in your hair,

—47B: Proud Lady Margaret

This ballad tells us that the hero was in such a solemn and elegant environment in the church that he should be illuminated by the aura of god. The appearance of the church was like a castle, showing its authority with a strong, heavy, honest, unbreakable image. The church was dimly lit, which gave us a sense of mystery and religion as well as a sense of solemnity and oppression. There were murals and sculptures in the interior of the church, with relief decorations on both the internal column heads and the exterior facade walls. These sculpture images were integrated with the building structure. It is well known that the roman-style sculpture has the spirit of ancient sculpture with more applications of deformation exaggeration, and difference from the ancient realistic style, the high, straight, sharp architectural style reflects the strong upward momentum and the remarkable religious thoughts, which is the spiritual reflection of strong upward vitality.

56A.10 As it fell out upon a day,
Poor Lazarus sickened and died;
Then came two angels out of heaven
His soul therein to guide.
56A.11 'Rise up, rise up, brother Lazarus,
And go along with me;
For you've a place prepared in heaven,
To sit on an angel's knee.'

---56A: Dives and Lazarus

The Ballad *Dives and Lazarus* tells the story of a rich man Dives who gave a banquet in honor of the guests when a poor man Lazarus who came to the door of Dives' to beg him for something to eat and drink. Dives replied that he was not Lazarus' brother, and refused to give any food and drink to him, moreover, he sent his servant to whip him and set his dog to bite him. However, the servants could not whip Lazarus, and the dog just licked his sores instead of biting him. When Dives and Lazarus died, the angel took Lazarus to heaven while the serpent took Dives to hell; Dives asked Lazarus for a drop of water and complained about the scorn he received in his life. The meaning of paradise is similar to the Kingdom of heaven while the Kingdom of Heaven includes the paradise, which according to Christian tradition is the place where the only God resides with his Angels and saints. Generally, any humans who believe in Jehovah can enter this place; they think Heaven (from the Greek original Basileia) is the ideal Kingdom where there are royal power, supreme power and ruling intention. Therefore, the Kingdom of Heaven is a kingdom ruled by the authority of God, and it has three meanings in the Bible: 1) those who accept the truth directly, submit to God's will, and their hearts are ruled by God as Kings (Luke the Evangelist 17:20 -21); 2) The Church of God, ruled by God himself, which manifests God's wisdom, power, and glory (Matthew the Apostle 13:24,31,44); 3)

the place where the saved people will dwell when the time of Lord Jesus's doomsday comes, which is the best destination that Christians would hope for. Heaven and Hell in the ballad reflect the human being's beautiful as well as miserable end-result.

In Chinese folk religion, Heaven, Kingdom of Heaven, paradise, celestial realm, and divine realm are synonymous, referring to the celestial realm ruled by Jade Emperor(Yudi) opposed to the human world. It is believed that when a person dies, he would ascend to Heaven, each person's ancestors are looking down on him from the celestial realm. The spirits of the ancestors in Heaven will also bless their descendants on the earth, that is why the Chinese people have the tradition of worshiping gods and worshiping their ancestors. According to the ancient Chinese religious tradition, the ruler of the universe is the Emperor Tian Di. However, the Confucian elite made an impersonal interpretation about Emperor Tian Di, which made him invisible and impenetrable, far away from the feelings of the people, embodying the omnipotent aspects of "Taoism". It can be assumed that religious consciousness is the "Signifier" (the object of symbol) of religious behavior while religious behavior is the "Signified" (symbols) of religious consciousness. The religious behaviors themselves are symbols; they also cooperate with many other non-behavior symbols. As to religious symbols, whether linguistic or non-linguistic, abstract or figurative, their symbolic functions are multi-faceted and multi-level, some of which are signifier, some of which are signified, and they are often both signifier and signified. A signified can have more than one signifier, and vice versa. All the symbols of religion are a huge system of metaphorical symbols which point directly or indirectly to its core doctrines. For example:

When the Heaven Road was temporarily closed,
They set up ladders to ascend to the Heaven Temple.
With a fan in each person's hand,
They shook it to ascend to the Paradise.
They shook their fans to ascend to the Heaven Palace,
And accepted instructions from the saint of Emperor Yu Huang.
As Emperor Yu Huang ended every case fairly,
The two opposing principles in nature of Yin and yang were distinct.

——A Bound Edition of Wedding Songs

In Buddhism, heaven is not a place where you can enjoy happiness forever, but only a place where you can enjoy great blessings, such as God's, as well as Asura's world, but these are not eternal, and you need to participate in reincarnation after the end of your life; The only extrication is Nirvana. Heaven, in Buddhism, is divided into three realms with twenty-eight days. The three major levels are: the Desire Realm, in which anyone born from this realm has not only a sexual body (material body), but a diet desire; Sexual Realm, in which anyone born from this realm has a sexual body without a diet desire; Non-sexual Realm, in which all that born from this

world have not any sexual body but divine consciousness. There are six level days in the Desire Realm which is close to the human world, eighteen level days in the Sexual Realm and four level days in the Non-sexual Realm up it. As a matter of fact, humans of practicing charity work can only live in the desire realm for six days. In both Sexual Realm and Non-sexual Realm, except the five-pure-dwelling level on the upper of the Sexual Realm living the three fruit saints of Theravada, the rest are the days of meditation that the meditators spent.

Religious ideas always play the important roles in moral restraints, as they worship their religious idols, people with religious belief are willing to act according to the doctrine, doing strictly their self-discipline and self-cultivation work. In this sense, the religious idols play a role in life norms. People who have this kind of good-will spiritual world can enjoy the good-will mood that they have created by themselves as the protagonist, which is the religious metaphor of entering heaven. People who have the spirit of heaven, his whole spiritual world are benign, and his whole spiritual world is lithe. Thus, Heaven and hell in Buddhism are just a convenient enlightenment going along with people's religious psychology. (Su, 2004, p.231)

1A.18 'And poyson is greener than the grass,
And the Devil is worse than woman was.'

——1A: Riddles Wisely Expounded

3. SOURCE DOMAIN COMPARISON OF RELIGION METAPHORS IN THESE TWO FOLK SONGS

Christians believed it was the devil that tempted Adam and Eva to eat the forbidden fruit, and they described him as a degenerated angel standing on the opposite side of truth to threaten the world by evil, and he along with the degenerated angels would be condemned forever. (Leeming, 2005, p.17) In mainstream beliefs of Christianity, Satan often stands for the devil, while modern Christians consider the devil to be an angel, and one-third of the angels, like the devil, has betrayed God and are convicted to live in the lake of fire. The devil is described as a monster hating not only all the human beings but their creations, acting against God, spreading lies and wrecking their souls greatly. As goats and goats' horns, goats' fur, goats' ears, goats' noses and goats' canine teeth, are typical mould-makings of the Devil's in the Christian art, so goats, rams and pigs are always associated with the devil. (Fritscher, 2004, p.23) Because Satan is often regarded as the serpent that tempted Eva to eat the forbidden fruit, he is portrayed to be a snake. Although this view does not exist in the narrative of Adam and Eva, the Book of *The Revelation* in particular indicates that Satan is a serpent, just like the line of "The

devil is worse than a woman” in the ballad of *Riddles Wisely Expounded* mirrors a woman’s wickedness.

Burning incense is a common ritual of worshipping gods in Chinese Buddhism, Taoism, Confucianism and folk sacrifice, which symbolizes the communication with gods. All the decorations in temple halls are applied to cooperate with the central altar, which is a symbolic sacred space on the whole while a higher level of symbolic sacred space is formed on the central altar. The temple is the place where the gods communicate with their worshipers, and its symbolic meaning lays emphasis on the explicit function of the gods they offer, and the central altar is the space for the gods’ self-existence, its symbolic meaning emphasizes on the inner nature of the gods they offer, another example:

After they have done the donations,
Maps of bells and drums are filled in five temple halls on the
gold street.

——A Bound Edition of Wedding Songs

The sounds of bells and drums can symbolize the divine power, and it is believed that they have the functions of communicating with gods, warding off evil, dispelling evil, and bringing benefit. In Taoism, there are toasts by ringing bells of “Far Spreading into the night, high circling around the jade room, deep reaching the nine temples, seven ancestors go up to the heaven.” If the bell sounds loud, it will make people be excited to alert, if the drum sounds low and dull, spreading away to sink into nothingness, the meaning is inexhaustible, so that these two effects can complement each other, embodying a harmonious charm of Yin and Yang (the two opposing principles in nature). As bell sounds can attract more attention than drum sounds, the former is more symbolic than the latter in the temple life. As a result, there is a common saying among the people as “Being a monk a day, striking the bell a day.” Buddhists hold a view that the bell is a symbol of wisdom, and that the bell sounds can remove troubles, so there is another saying as “Hearing the bell sounds, you will be lightened from troubles, and with wisdom growing, you will gain insights.” (Ju & Gao, 2010, p.14)

Inviting our ancestor to the banquet hall,
Inviting our ancestor to drink a toast.
Censers without fire do not flourish in families,
Censers with fire do flourish in families.
Lots with good wishes make people joyful,
May our ancestor keep us safe forever.
——A edition of 12-year-pilgrimage Songs

Burning incense in China originated from the use of “Ding (ancient cooking vessel with two loop handles and three or four legs)” in Shang and Zhou dynasties. The ancient Chinese bronze Ding was used for cooking meat, offering sacrifices, and so on. The ancestors dedicated what they had into praying to heaven for blessings, asking their gods to bless their tribes and their ethnic groups. However, it is actually not the same as the incense burner that today’s people have seen. The greatest function of

modern incense burner is a ritual instrument for worshipping Buddha or ancestors. In fact, incense burner is also the refined scholars’ beloved things; they are usually placed in the hall or on the study room desk, with a stick of incense lighted on while reading, it creates a wonderful mood of “reading in a scent room at night”. At the time when the first ancestor of Zen Buddhism, Dharma, came to China from the west, Buddhism started, making it popular for people to erect Buddha figures and to build temples, and incense burners, as sacrificial ritual vessels, have been widely used. Therefore, spiritual incense burners endow people with more life and spirituality, bearing and reflecting the broad and far-reaching history and culture. These subject image words related to religious activities appear repeatedly in Yao folk songs, and the connotation of their mapping has obtained stability and conventionality in the inheritance, which can be used to express specific thoughts and feelings, so that they have become the accumulation of ethnic group’s culture, or the “Storage” of it, or the accumulation and living fossil of an ethnic group’s.

The subject image word “Helen” often appears in English folk songs as a metaphor of “Stunning beauty, beauty and purity”. The word comes from the Iliad in Homeric Hymns. Helen was the daughter of Zeus, who was a King of all the Greek Gods. She was the Queen of Menelaus, a King of Sparta, and she was lured away by the Prince Paris of Troy for her beauty, the result was a decade-long Trojan War. So Helen is often used as the main image word to express or praise “Beautiful woman” or “Beautiful and kind person” in the works of all ages, such as the poem *To Helen*, the masterpiece of the American writer and literary critic E. A. Poe. (Liu, 2012, p.127)

751.8 ‘Is there onny of my castles broken doun,
Or onny of my towers won?
Or is Fair Helen brought to bed
Of a doughter or a son?’
751.9 ‘There’s nane of [your] castles broken doun,
Nor nane of your towers won,
Nor is Fair Helen brought to bed
Of a doghter or a son.’
——Lord Lovel

The ballad *Lord Lovel* is about a Lord who told his wife that he would be away from her. Some time later, he missed her very much, so he returned, but heard that she had died, and then the Lord died with grief. As people buried them together, a Valentine’s knot grew on their grave. The plot of this story is much like that in the Chinese tragedy of *Liang Shanbo and Zhu Yingtai*. The heroine’s name of the story is Helen. Documentation retrieval finds that Helen appears 39 times out of 100 English folk songs, all of which are the names of women with beauty, reflecting the universal use of this metaphor.

The Yao ethnic group’s belief belongs to polytheism. In the past, they believed in animism, and had a pious reverence for nature, offering sacrifices to village gods, house gods, water gods, wind gods, rain gods, thunder gods, tree gods and mountain gods, incense was burned every year. For every process of production, such as hunting, cutting down mountains, gathering, ploughing, sowing, transplanting, harvesting, building barns, eating

new rice, etc. they would invite the master to choose the auspicious day by divination, and held a sacrifice. Panyao and Shanziyao (two branches of Yao's) mainly cultivated on the mountain ridges in the past, they believed that the mountains were controlled by the mountain god and they had to worship him to get a good harvest. Therefore, when rounding up wild boar, goats, yellow deer, and other animals that trample on crops, the master or Taoist first mumbled to the gods, praying to the mountain god to bless them to hunt wild animals, so that crops would be protected. After the prey, they must first sacrifice with the animal head to the mountain god, and then the prey could be distributed among them.

CONCLUSION

Religion is a social consciousness of superhuman and supernatural power, as well as the activity of people's worshiping and believing among them. As a result, it is a social and cultural system that people synthesize this kind of consciousness and behavior in order to normalize and institutionalize it. When we examine the religion metaphors in English folk songs and Yao folk songs, we also take the opportunity to study the basic behaviors, spiritual world, and the process of understanding the objective world of the two ethnic groups'. Therefore, we can look the religion metaphors in these two kinds of folk songs as not only a linguistic and cognitive phenomenon, but also an intangible cultural heritage with great social value.

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