

Original Research Article

A Comparison Between the Goddess Image in Ancient China and Ancient Greek Mythology from the Perspective of Female Values

Min Zhou, Yan Wang*

Zhejiang Ocean University, Zhoushan City 316022, Zhejiang Province, China. E-mail: 786776562@qq.com

Abstract: Mythology, as a special cultural carrier, can reflect people's spiritual values in a certain period and region. In ancient Chinese mythology and ancient Greek mythology, there are some goddess with similar attributes or symbolic meaning. Their symbolic attributes essentially represent some specific areas of women's values, such as fertility, wisdom, love and marriage. Based on the mythology of ancient China and Greece as well as the ancient social background of the two countries, this paper analyzes and compares the goddess images in the myths of the two countries from the perspective of fertility, wisdom, love and marriage in the female values. In the aspect of fertility, China in the patriarchal society showed the worship of the supremacy of women. In the aspect of wisdom, the ancient Greek society affirmed the importance of moral wisdom, and also emphasized the necessity of acquiring personal skills, interests and reputation. In the aspect of love and marriage, women in both countries were victims of the patriarchal society, but the ancient Greek society emphasized the pursuit of individual hedonism and freedom. What's more, the goddess images in Chinese mythology are romantic, while the goddess images in ancient Greek mythology is more humanistic. From these aspects, the comparative analysis of the two goddesses can reveal the characteristics, social causes and evolution of the ancient women's values of the people of the two countries.

Keywords: Mythology; Goddess; Female Values

1. Introduction

In anthropology and psychoanalysis, Mythology is defined as a special cultural carrier that reflects the different social values of people in different regions and cultures. It is generally recognized that mythology is an important basis for people to study the spirit and value of the people of a certain era. In recent years, with the continuous development of female consciousness, more and more studies have begun to focus on the female values embodied in the female images in the mythology. Ancient China and ancient Greece, as the origin of Chinese and western human civilization respectively, are rich in mythological and historical materials. Therefore, the study of various goddess images in their myths has been regarded as an important basis for people to explore the historical development trend and characteristics of female values in the two countries.

Many scholars and experts have also done some relevant research in this field. Wu Tong (2008) made a comparative study of the characteristics of goddesses in Chinese and Greek mythology from the perspective of literature and art^[1]. Liu Yinfang and Song Hui (2016), mainly elaborated the shaping basis and historical evolution process of Chinese and western female values. They believe that the differences in values between Chinese and western women are mainly due to different historical, social and cultural factors. Sheng Xiaoming (2017) suggests that the mythological goddesses

Copyright © 2020 Min Zhou and Yan Wang

doi: 10.18282/l-e.v8i2.1108

This is an open-access article distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution Non-Commercial License

(<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc/4.0/>), which permits unrestricted non-commercial use, distribution, and reproduction in any medium, provided the original work is properly cited.

of the two countries differ greatly in their appearance. The Chinese goddesses usually had grotesque figures, often partly human hybrids, while the ancient Greek goddesses had goddesses possess outstanding appearance and graceful posture. In addition, he also analyzed the number and social status of the goddesses in the myths of the two countries. However, among these existing studies, there are relatively few studies that analyze and compare the goddess images with the same representative attribute or function in the mythology of the two countries from some specific female values.

Therefore, this research starts from the perspective of female values of three main aspects: Fertility, wisdom, and love and marriage, focusing on the comparison of the goddess with similar representative attributes in the mythological systems of China and ancient Greece: Nu Wa and Gaea, Xuan nu and Athena, Fu Fei and Aphrodite. In addition, this thesis also makes a detailed analysis of the characteristics of the women's values of the ancient Chinese and the ancient Greek people, as well as their social and historical causes, so as to conclude the evolution direction and development trend of their women's values.

2. A brief introduction on ancient Chinese mythology and ancient Greek mythology

Up to now, scholars in different fields have different interpretations of the definition and origin of myth. From a more modern anthropological point of view, mythology is a means of understanding the evolution of human thought in a given period and region. And this theory also confirms the relationship between myth and ancient human life, as well as the relationship of labor and spirit. It shows that the creation of myth is not a figment of people's imagination, but a portrayal of human real life and labor style. In the primitive society, due to the low productivity, primitive humans were always in the process of fighting with nature. They were amazed by some strange natural phenomena, such as the alternation of seasons, periodic changes of the moon, lightning, etc., and they could not make a reasonable explanation for these phenomena. Therefore, they began to imagine that there were many supernatural beings in their surroundings, which gave rise to the various immortals, demons, and monsters we see in mythology. Thus it can be seen that the primitive myth, in a sense, is the portrayal of human labor life and a good reflection of spiritual concepts.

Due to various historical and cultural reasons, ancient Chinese myths have not been well documented. Unlike some Western myths, which have a relatively complete spectrum of gods, Chinese myths are relatively fragmented and have no systematic logical order. The only extant work that preserves the most ancient Chinese mythological materials is the *Classic of Mountains and Seas*. The main myths and figures of Chinese mythology were pieced together from the works of Chinese poets and philosophers through the ages. Chinese mythology mainly revolves around the working life of ancient Chinese people, reflecting the social productivity level and people's spiritual value in a certain period.

As the earliest literary form in Europe, ancient Greek mythology was originally handed down from the oral poetry of ancient Greek people, and was recorded in many ancient Greek literary works completely. Among them, the most famous works are the *Theogony* by the ancient Greek poet Hesiod and Homer's two epics, *The Odyssey* and *The Iliad*. In *Theogony*, Hesiod recorded detailed genealogy of gods and some early Greek mythology, including the formation of the world, the birth of gods and the origin of the Titans. Homer's epic revolves around the most famous Olympian gods, such as Zeus, the king of the gods, Athena, the goddess of wisdom, Aphrodite, the goddess of love and so on. In Greek mythology, each god was of a different rank and character, and together they ruled and kept the world safe.

3. Female values and the development trend of female values in ancient China and ancient Greece

3.1 A brief introduction to female values

Female values are an important social group psychological phenomenon with women as the main body. Based on social practice and individual experience, women's values are also a way and attitude to deal with many life affairs such as fertility, family, love, wisdom, faith, etc. At the same time, it is also a selective tendency for women to evaluate vari-

ous social affairs.

In the earlier period, both ancient China and ancient Greece were male-dominated patriarchal societies, and the social status of women was relatively low^[2]. With the awakening of female consciousness, there have been three waves of feminist movement in history. The publication of the Feminist Declaration, the proposal of mature feminist literary theories and the increase of various feminist schools all show the awakening of female consciousness.

Women's values have their own characteristics in different historical periods, different regional conditions and different cultural backgrounds. Ancient China and ancient Greece have formed their unique female values in the long history of development. By analyzing the similarities and differences between the two countries in particular women's values, we can find out the historical evolution characteristics between the two peoples in women's values. Therefore, this thesis will mainly analyze and compare the characteristics and evolution trend of people's female values reflected by goddess images in ancient Chinese and Ancient Greek mythology from three aspects of female values: fertility, wisdom and love.

3.2 The historical evolution trend of Chinese women's values

In China's primitive matriarchal society, people respect nature while regarding women as creators of life, so they had the supreme worship of women. It was believed that women were also creators and builders of this society. But as China gradually entered the feudal society, agriculture became the main mode of production. However, the obvious difference of physical strength between men and women led to the inferior position of women in feudal society. At the same time, with the prevalence of Confucianism in China since the Han Dynasty, there are many rules and restrictions on women in society, such as the constraints of "three obedience and four virtues" and the system of "polygamy", etc. The woman is regarded as a kind of property of her husband, and must obey the orders of her husband and her son. As a result, women's status has been greatly reduced. This also makes the depiction of various kinds of Goddess images in mythology change greatly with the change of social concept.

3.3 Historical evolution trend of ancient Greek female values

Ancient Greece was also a patriarchal society dominated by men, and the status of women was relatively low. Women's status was also relatively low, they were often regarded as the tools of male lineage and the objects of sexual desire, some women were even regarded as the perpetrators of the disaster. However, women in ancient Greece expressed their inner demands more frequently than women in ancient China. They were not overly dependent on men but had their own pursuits, ambitions and desires in marriage, love, family and career. They advocated freedom and dared to challenge some men in certain fields. At the same time, they had their own characteristics, which contained both advantages and disadvantages. It also made the goddesses in ancient Greek mythology reflect more independent personality and more real characteristics.

4. Comparisons and contrasts on the goddess images between the two mythologies

4.1 A comparison and contrast on the images of fertility goddess: Nu Wa and Gaea

4.1.1 The fertility concept and Nu Wa myth in Chinese matrilineal society

In the primitive matriarchal society in China, human social productivity was low and scientific and technological knowledge was very backward^[3]. They were often mysterious and curious about unexplained phenomena around them. In terms of the origin of life, the primitive people did not understand that a woman could have children only after sexual intercourse with a man. They discovered that life was created by women. Since reproduction represented by the genitals, people in primitive societies equated the concepts of reproduction and the genitals. As a result, men were seen as having no right to participate in the most important matter of reproduction. Therefore, in this period, people had a supreme worship for women, and they believed that women were the creator and leader of the society. This is fully reflected in the myth of Nu Wa, the mother goddess.

In Chinese mythology, Nu Wa was a goddess with a human head and snake body. In order to bring order to the world, she took the shape of a human being out of a special kind of clay, and the human race was born. Nu Wa regarded humans as her own children and let them run the world. She created the institution of marriage for mankind so that they could reproduce and survive. For this reason, Nu Wa was also regarded as the goddess of marriage and fertility in Chinese mythology^[4]. After Nu Wa created human beings, one day, there was a great catastrophe in the universe, a big hole was broken in the sky, and the earth was also split into deep cracks. All kinds of natural disasters followed, flooding, subsidence, fire spread, and human beings suffered greatly. Nu Wa felt very brokenhearted when she saw that her children had suffered such a great disaster. So the merciful mother god came to the river, and filled the holes in the sky and the cracks on the earth with a magic colorful stone. After the restoration of safety and peace on earth, Nu Wa thought her mission had been fulfilled, ascended into heaven and the shape of her body gradually dissipated and merged into the universe.

4.1.2 The fertility view in ancient Greece and Gaea goddess myth in Greece

In ancient Greece, the level of social productivity was also relatively low, and labor force was still regarded as the primary driving force for economic growth, so people still pursued the massive growth of population. Although the ancient Greek people had the similar primitive fertility worship as the ancient Chinese people, the whole society in this period was still male-centered. The ancient Greeks did not have the unconditional worship for women as the ancient Chinese in matriarchal societies. Apart from being seen as the procreation, women were mostly in a very low position. Their mission is to allow men to carry on the family line, even if only for the sake of male sexual desire. It was exactly reflected in the myth of Gaea, the mother goddess of earth.

As the mother of gods and the goddess, Gaea was also regarded as the goddess of earth in ancient Greek mythology. According to the *Theogony* written by Hesiod, Gaea gave birth to twelve Titans, three Cyclops, and three Centimans. Gaea gave birth from his fingertips to Uranus, the god of sky, Pontus, the god of the sea, and Ourea, the god of the mountains. Prometheus, the creator of mankind, was also one of her descendants^[5]. As the original god of the sky, Uranus dominated the sky, married Gaea, and indulged himself in carnal pleasures, doing nothing but procreation. When day and night coincide, the world is always in chaos. In the end, Gaea could not bear it, and persuaded his youngest son Cronus to cut off his father Uranus' genitals with a special dagger provided by Gaea and throw it into the sea.

4.1.3 The comparison and contrast of the images between Nu Wa and Gaea

Nu Wa was described as a great, indomitable and selfless Mother God in Chinese mythology. She was determined to create human beings and let them continue to survive, which not only reflects the powerful fertility of Nu Wa, but also reflects her gentle and virtuous character, full of maternal brilliance. In addition, Nu Wa bravely saved human being from a devastating disaster. On the one hand, it reflects that Nu Wa had not only the gentleness but also the tenacity and bravery. On the other hand, Nu Wa rose to the sky and disappeared in the universe after she standing up for mankind, which also showed her selfless dedication. Through the image of Nu Wa, we can see the people's worship of women in primitive matriarchal society in China. Nu Wa not only gave human life by herself, but also saved human in danger. Through mythology, the Chinese people in the primitive matrilineal society not only praised the great fertility of women and the great quality of selfless dedication to the people, but also highlighted the social status of women, who were regarded as the leader and "savior" of the matrilineal society. The image of Nu Wa is a typical representation of the "divinity" of the immortals in Chinese mythology. She has no typical personal feelings, character trait or desire pursuit. In shaping the image of Nu Wa, Chinese people focused on pursuing the "beauty" and "goodness" reflected by her image, while ignoring the "authenticity" reflected by her character. In people's idea, Nu Wa is the perfect woman in the ideal world.

Gaea also appears as a great creator in mythology. According to the *Theogony*, Gaea created all things and gods, and indirectly created human beings. It can reflect the idea of ancient Greek people is similar to that of ancient Chinese people—they all adore women's fertility. Ancient Greek people even think that everything can be created by women. But different from Nu Wa's original intention of creating human beings, Gaea's production process was more like a

natural process instead of her subjective will. In addition, after Gaea gave birth to Uranus, the God of the sky, she combined with Uranus and continued to reproduce^[6]. It not only reflect the status of women in ancient Greece was inferior to that of men, but also reflect the desire of women in ancient Greece to some extent. When Gaea couldn't stand Uranus' endless occupation, she secretly instigated her youngest son, Cronus, to castrate her father, which also showed that Gaea, as the creator of Uranus, didn't dare to fight against Uranus openly, but needed another man to help her achieve her goal. This not only showed women's low social status in ancient Greece, but also showed their unremitting pursuit of freedom and their ability to use wisdom and scheming to achieve their goals. Compared with the "divinity" reflected in the image of Goddess Nu Wa in Chinese mythology, the image of ancient Greek goddess Gaea was more "humanization", with distinct character, unique human charm and more real image. When building Gaea's image, the ancient Greek people focused on pursuing the "authenticity" and "beauty" reflected by Gaea's image, while ignoring the "goodness" in her character.

4.2 A comparison and contrast on the images of wisdom goddess: Xuan Nu and Athena

4.2.1 The ancient Chinese wisdom view and Xuan Nu myth

In ancient China, the concept of wisdom evolved from the basic concept of Confucianism. Confucius believed that human wisdom can be divided into two aspects: cognitive wisdom and moral wisdom. He thought that human's moral wisdom was the most important, and cognitive wisdom is only a means to cultivate one's moral wisdom. The ancient Chinese people believed that the main wisdom of a person was mainly based on his moral character and the social contributions he made, and the realization of moral wisdom also depended on the development of cognitive wisdom^[7]. This highlighted the importance of a person's excellent moral character in the ancient Chinese people's spiritual values. This was well reflected in the myth of the Xuan Nu.

In ancient Chinese mythology, Chi You is the monster leader of a primitive tribe in ancient times. He had been making trouble in the world for a long time. As the leader in charge of the human tribe, Huang Di had been in a long-term war against Chi You. However, Chi You was too invincible, Huang Di was deeply struggling because he could not subdue Chi You. One day, there suddenly appeared a woman with half head and half bird, named "Xuan Nu", who was the wise goddess of war. She came to the Huang Di and taught him some tactical strategies, then left. After receiving the strategies taught by Xuan Nu, Huang Di became very mysterious when he arranged his army. Although Chi You had great strength, he could not see through Huang Di's extraordinary strategy offered by Xuan Nu, and he was soon subdued by Huang Di. Peace has finally returned to the world.

4.2.2 The ancient Greek wisdom view and Athena myth

In ancient Greece, people regarded wisdom as a noble virtue. With the development of Greek city-state history, the wisdom of ancient Greeks was also developing. The ancient Greek wisdom also was emphasized with the importance of virtue. Greek people believed that a person's "Wisdom" included not only a person's moral character, strengths and advantages, but also a person's skills and talents. In addition, humanism is also an important feature of ancient Greek wisdom. This can be well reflected in the two epic masterpieces "The Iliad" and "The Odyssey" written by the ancient Greek poet Homer. Although their contents revolve around mythology, the main theme is to praise the courage and optimism of the Greeks to explore the world actively. The images of these gods and heroes in the myth reflect the humanism spirit of the Greek wisdom.

In Greek mythology, goddess Athena was regarded as the Goddess of wisdom, science and art. She had a high level of intelligence and technology. She taught people the skills of spinning, pottery, painting and carving. In competing with Poseidon for the ownership of the city of Athens, Athena bet with Poseidon that everyone needed to give the Athenian people a gift^[8]. Poseidon chose the horse symbolizing war, while Athena chose the olive tree symbolizing peace, which could also bring wealth to the people of Athens. So Athena won Poseidon and acquired the ownership of the city of Athens. In the Trojan War, Athena was jealous because the Trojan Prince Paris didn't give her the Golden Apple engraved with the words "For the most beautiful goddess". Therefore, she helped the Greek allied forces to attack Troy,

which made the people of Troy had been struggling with the disaster caused by the war for a long time.

4.2.3 The comparison and contrast of the images between Xuan Nu and Athena

In Chinese mythology, Xuan Nu was still shaped into a half human and half monster image. Her identity gives a mysterious charm. When the Huang Di could not defeat Chi You, the goddess took the initiative to come to the Huang Di and gave him some tactical strategies. This showed her noble moral character of caring for people's safety and peace in the world. Relying on these tactical strategies of Xuan Nu, Huang Di immediately subdued Chi You, which also showed Xuan Nu's profound wisdom. After finishing her mission, Xuan Nu left. It also showed Xuan Nu's noble moral character of selfless dedication with no desire and no reward. Chinese mythology paid more attention to show the lofty moral character of Xuan Nu and the great social contribution she made. In this way, people praised the wisdom of Xuan Nu. This fully embodied the Chinese traditional wisdom concept of "moral quality as the most important" characteristics. Like the image of Goddess Nu Wa, the image of Xuan Nu fully showed the "goodness" and "beauty" of women, while its own "Authenticity" character was ignored to some extent.

Athena was regarded as the symbol of wisdom in Greek mythology. She had all kinds of superb skills, teaching human textile, ceramics, painting, sculpture and other technologies. This reflect the importance of "skills" in ancient Greek wisdom concept. In the process of fighting for Athens city with Poseidon, she chose olive branch that symbolizes "peace" as a gift to Athens people, which also showed her noble character and excellent wisdom. Compared with the Xuan Nu in Chinese mythology, Athena not only had the extraordinary strategies, but also can master all kinds of skills and talents, which fully reflect the core of ancient Greek wisdom concept: "Virtue" includes technology and talents. But in the golden apple incident, she would rather for her own sake, regardless of the innocent people of Troy into a more tragic war. This also reflect from the side that Athena does not pursue noble moral wisdom and great social contribution like Xuan Nu, but has more real and distinct personal emotion and personality characteristics. In conclusion, the image of Xuan Nu reflects the characteristics of the ancient wisdom concept in China, which takes moral wisdom as the core. Although the image of Athena reflected the importance of morality, it also emphasized the importance of skills. At the same time, in terms of self-interest, Xuan Nu shows the characteristics of selfless dedication, while Athena's image shows her pursuit of reputation and personal interests, even at the expense of moral standards to help her achieve her goals^[9]. In the personal image of the goddess, Xuan Nu showed the "divinity" in her image, while Athena showed the "humanization" in her image. The former is romantic, while the latter is more humanistic.

4.3 A comparison and contrast of the images of love and beauty goddess: Fu Fei and Aphrodite

4.3.1 The ancient Chinese concept of marriage and love and Fu Fei myth

The ancient Chinese concept of marriage and love has been deeply influenced by Confucianism since the Han Dynasty. Ancient Chinese Confucianists put forward such systems or doctrines as "the Three Cardinal Guides and Five Constant Virtues", "the Three Obediences and the Four Virtues" and "polygamy" etc. All of these made women's status in society and family greatly reduced. As for love, women's right to pursue love had been greatly weakened. They were required not to freely choose their partners according to their own wishes. As for marriage, men had absolute control over women, and women were required to obey their husbands' orders. And in that feudal society, people's requirements for women's "chastity" were also quite strict, which further improved the status of men in feudal society, and made women become accessories and victims in marriage.

In ancient Chinese mythology, Fu Fei, is famous for her beautiful appearance and is regarded as the Goddess of beauty in Chinese mythology. Many ancient Chinese poets praised and exalted her beauty. Fu Fei was the wife of He Bo in myth. However, He Bo was so light-minded that Fu Fei had no love for her husband. One day, Hou Yi, a hero who once shot the sun, passed by the river where Fu Fei located. When Hou Yi saw her, he was immediately fascinated by her peerless beauty. Meanwhile, the lonely Fu Fei also had love feelings for Hou Yi. This affair was known by He Bo. He became furious and wanted to avenge Hou Yi. In the process of fighting, He Bo was defeated by Hou Yi because

he was shot in the eye with an arrow. When Fu Fei saw that her husband was injured, she felt very guilty and remorseful, and refused to continue to associate with Hou Yi. Therefore, this relationship had come to an abrupt end.

4.3.2 The ancient Greek concept of marriage and love and Aphrodite myth

Ancient Greek society was also a typical patriarchal society. This was also reflected in the ancient Greek concept of love and marriage. In ancient Greece, on the one hand, women were mainly required by their families or fathers to choose their marriage. After marriage, they were required to obey their husbands' orders. However, on the other hand, the ancient Greeks also attached great importance to the pursuit of hedonism, especially the pursuit of love^[10]. Therefore, the ancient Greeks did not object to women's pursuit of their perfect marriage of free love, which also reflected the humanistic spirit of the ancient Greek marriage concept.

In ancient Greek mythology, Aphrodite was regarded as the God of beauty and love. Men, human beings and immortals are all overwhelmed by her beauty her. Therefore, Aphrodite had many romantic affairs. In mythology, Aphrodite was once ordered by Zeus to marry Hephaestus, the ugly God of fire, because she refused Zeus' pursuit. Since Aphrodite had no love for her husband, she soon fell in love with Ares, the God of war. This affair was discovered by the God of fire. Waves of anger at the humiliation that had brought him to expose the scandal between Aphrodite and Mars to other gods^[11]. But Aphrodite was not ashamed of the revelation, and the rest of the gods saw this affair as a joke. Later, When Aphrodite was tired of his relationship with Ares, one day, she saw Antonis, the most handsome man in the world and fell in love with him. Unfortunately, shortly after they met, Antonis was killed by a boar turned into by Ares. Although the noble goddess Aphrodite was heartbroken, she soon went on searching for her next lover.

4.3.3 The comparison and contrast between the images of Fu Fei and Aphrodite

In ancient Chinese mythology and Greek mythology, both Fu Fei and Aphrodite are beautiful goddesses with extraordinary beauty, which makes their love quite romantic. However, as the goddess with the most beautiful appearance, they can't choose their own marriage partner. This reflect the low social status of women in both ancient China and Greece in that period.

In the face of the choice of "love" or "marriage", the two goddesses had different attitudes: the latter was chosen by Fu Fei and the former by Aphrodite. Although Fu Fei knew her husband was very romantic, she did not dare to express her dissatisfaction to him, so she became depressed all day long. It showed that women have no initiative in marriage. But after she met Hou Yi, although she also had the love to him, but when Hou Yi dueled with his husband He Bo, she chose to give up her love because his husband was hurt by Hou Yi. It also reflects that in ancient China, women's concept of marriage was seriously affected by feudal ethics. On the one hand, women are required to obey their husbands' orders in marriage, and the importance of women's "Chastity" in marriage is emphasized. On the other hand, it also shows that in this period, women did not have the right of free love, and became cowardly and humble in their marriage and love, and consequently became the victims of feudal ethics.

As for Aphrodite, in the face of her husband who didn't love her, she was not willing to be bound by marriage, but to pursue her love to her heart's content^[12]. In addition, when the God of fire exposed the adultery between Aphrodite and Ares to the gods, the tolerant attitude of the gods to Aphrodite also showed that the ancient Greeks' pursuit of hedonism even exceeded the pursuit of "loyalty" in marriage. This also shows that in ancient Greek society, women were not opposed to the freedom of pursuing love and sexual desire while they were required to obey their husbands. In the Amorous History of Aphrodite, we can see a female image full of personality, freedom, sensibility and charm. The ancient Greek people gave numerous praise to the beauty and charm of the goddess, but ignored the requirement of her moral character. This not only shows the ancient Greek's pursuit of beauty, but also fully embodies the humanistic spirit of the ancient Greek's view of marriage and love.

5. Conclusion

In ancient Chinese and Greek mythology, the images of Nu Wa and Gaea, the goddess of fertility, reflect the worship of women's fertility in the matriarchal society of the two countries. The difference between the two is that the im-

age of Nu Wa had a higher position in people's mind during the matriarchal clan period in China, and distributed great maternal brilliance. Her brave and selfless spirit embodies the Chinese people's pursuit of fine and noble ideology and morality. In ancient Greek mythology, Gaea's image not only reflects people's praise of women's powerful fertility, but also regards women to a certain extent as a tool for men to pass on their families and vent their sexual desire.

The myths of Xuan Nu and Athena reflect the similarities and differences between the ancient people of the two countries in their views on women's wisdom^[13]. In the myth, Xuan Nu showed her noble character of selfless dedication to the people as well as her extraordinary strategic wisdom. This highlights the importance of moral wisdom in the wisdom concept put forward by ancient Chinese Confucianism. The ancient Greek wisdom embodied by Athena not only included her noble moral wisdom, but also all kinds of skills. In addition, the image of Athena also shows the ancient Greeks' pursuit of reputation and personal interests.

In terms of the concept of marriage and love, the myth of Fu Fei fully reflects the image of the "victim" of women in the ancient feudal society of China in the marriage system and feudal ethics. They must remain "loyal" to their husbands and have no freedom to pursue love. The myth of Aphrodite emphasized the pursuit of beauty, love, freedom and hedonism, which was full of humanism.

In terms of the personal charm of women, the images of goddesses in ancient Chinese mythology highlight "beauty" and "goodness", but ignore the expression of "authenticity". Their images are full of "divinity", with romantic color. In addition, most of the ancient Chinese goddesses were the models of labor or the representatives of virtue that people praised in their spirit. Through the images of Nu Wa and Xuan Nu, we can find their broad and tenacious spirit of sacrifice for the people. These legends, immortals, heroes and so on all clearly show the traditional cultural style of the Chinese nation. In ancient Greek mythology, the images of the goddesses highlight "authenticity" and "beauty", but ignore the expression of "goodness"^[14]. Although their images are full of certain "divinity", the most characteristic is the "humanization" in their characters. They have the same emotions and desires as human beings: they have the noble side of benefiting the world, but they also have the side of neglecting moral principles for their own personal desires, which has the color of humanism.

The goddess Nu Wa, Xuan Nu and Fu Fei reflect the changing process of ancient Chinese women's status. In the primitive matriarchal society, women had absolute authority, but in the feudal society, under the constraints of Confucianism and feudal ethics, women became the victims of society and marriage. In addition, the characteristics of their images also reflect the traditional values of dedication, morality, benevolence and loyalty pursued by the ancient Chinese people, which also have some similarities with the values pursued by Chinese people in the present era. With the continuous development of Chinese society, Chinese modern values also advocate noble moral standards and spiritual realm such as dedication to others and collectivism. And the status of Chinese women is also gradually improving. Women and men have almost equal rights in the society.

Compared with the holy, perfect and pure goddess in Chinese mythology, the goddess in ancient Greek mythology are more like nobles in a kingdom, who pursue the ideal way of life and enjoy the pleasure brought by indulgence. Different from the noble morality and dedication advocated in ancient China, ancient Greece emphasized the development of individual character, the pursuit of spiritual freedom and encouraged people to have a positive and optimistic attitude towards life. The gods and goddess have their own emotions, desires, ideals, advantages and disadvantages like mortal people. This idea of advocating the expression of individual demands undoubtedly also lays the foundation for the pursuit of individualism in the Western values^[15]. They advocated pioneering spirit and pursue their ideal society with a heart full of vitality, courage and initiative spirit are the essence of the western civilization and their universal values.

For the limited time and space, this paper only focuses on three aspects of women's values: fertility, wisdom and love and marriage to analyze three pairs of Goddess images with the same attributes, which has certain reference value for the study of the causes and evolution trend of women's values in ancient China and ancient Greece. But obviously, if we want to study the ancient women's values of China and Greece more deeply, we need to study more mythological historical materials and analyze more goddess images from other aspects of women's values. This study hopes to provide some references for the fans of Chinese and Greek mythology and the scholars who will do further research in this

field in the future.

References

1. Ovid. *The metamorphoses*. Gregory H (translator). New York: Signet Classics; 2009.
2. Sheng X. Cultural and value differences of goddess in ancient Greece and China. *European Scientific Journal* 2017; 102-114.
3. Schwab G. *Gods and heroes of ancient Greece*. New York: Pantheon Books; 2001.
4. Hesiod. *Theogony. Works and Days. Testimonia*. New York: Harvard University Press; 2007.
5. Liu Y, Song H. Comparison and cultural integration of Chinese and western female values (in Chinese). *The Border Economy and Culture* 2016; (8): 47-48.
6. Guo C. The view of women in ancient Greece from the perspective of myth and legend (in Chinese). *Journal of Inner Mongolia Radio & TV University* 2014; (6): 27-29.
7. Wu T. A comparative study of Chinese and Greek mythological female images (in Chinese). *Journal of Neijiang Teachers College* 2008; (5): 86-88.
8. Yang L. *Myth and mythology* (in Chinese). Beijing: Beijing Normal University Press; 2009.
9. Yuan K. *Chinese myths and legends* (in Chinese). Beijing: Beijing Joint Publishing Company; 2012.
10. Jiang D. Nu Wa and ancient Chinese female worship (in Chinese). *Jiangxi Social Sciences* 1993; (1): 55-59.
11. Xu H. A preliminary study on the wisdom view of ancient Greeks (in Chinese). *Journal of Hebei Normal University*; 2011.
12. Song Y. On the changes of the social status of women in ancient Greece from the perspective of Greek myths and legends (in Chinese). *Youthful Days* 2014; (21): 16.
13. Zhao F. The historical evolution of Chinese ancient wisdom view and its axiological significance (in Chinese). *The Journal of Humanities* 1995; (5): 25-30.
14. Zhang Y. Confucianism and the concept of marriage in ancient China (in Chinese). *Great River Weekly* 2011; (1): 50-51.
15. An F, Liu X. An analysis of ancient Greek views on love and marriage (in Chinese). *Journal of Hunan University of Science and Technology* 2013; 34(9); 63-66.