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Human-divine communication in “The Nine Songs”: A symbolic anthropological perspective

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Abstract: This paper focuses on the theme of human-divine communication in the shamanic rites in *Chu ci*, uses “The Nine Songs” as the object of study, and discusses the functions and cultural connotations of four types of symbols in the process of human-divine communication, namely natural symbols, animal symbols, artifact symbols, and behavioral symbols. Natural symbols, such as thunder and lightning, as well as the sun and the moon, reflect the reverence and worship of the Chu people for the natural world. Animal symbols, such as dragons and phoenixes, symbolize sanctity and dignity. Artifact symbols, such as sacrificial vessels and musical instruments, serve as mediums in the rituals and strengthen the connection between humans and divinities. Behavioral symbols, such as dances and singing, embody the ways in which shamans interact with divinities. These symbols not only enrich the artistic expression of *Chu ci*, but also profoundly embody the unique religious beliefs, cultural concepts, and social structure of Chu.

Keywords: *Chu ci*; “Jiu ge”; human-divine communication; symbols; functions; cultural connotations

1. Introduction

As a treasure in the history of Chinese literature, *Chu ci* (楚辞) is known for its unique romanticist style and rich cultural connotations, which have had a profound influence on the literature of later generations. “Jiu ge 九歌” or “The Nine Songs”, as one of the representative chapters in *Chu ci*, is an important window for the study of Chu culture with its strong shamanic culture and unique artistic charm. It vividly depicts the scene of human-divine communication in the shamanic culture of Chu, shows the Chu people’s reverence for divinities, worship of nature, and yearning for a better life, and contains profound cultural symbolism. The solemn sacrificial scene in “Donghuang Taiyi 东皇太一” (“The Great Unity, God of the Eastern Sky”), the love stories in “Xiang Jun 湘君” (“The Goddess of the Xiang”) and “Xiang Furen 湘夫人” (“The Lady of the Xiang”), and the sorrowful chanting of the mountain gods in “Shan gui 山鬼” (“The Mountain Spirit”) are full of mysterious colors and romantic feelings, reflecting the unique way of thinking and cultural psychology of the Chu people. This paper aims to analyze the symbols related to the theme of “human-divine communication” in “The Nine Songs” and explore its cultural connotation, historical origin, and social significance, with a view to deepening the understanding of “The Nine Songs”. It is also expected to expand the horizons for research of *Chu ci* and facilitate the understanding of Chu culture as well as ancient Chinese culture as a whole.

2. Research methodology

This section briefly introduces the research purpose and question as well as the theoretical basis for the present study.

2.1. Research purpose and question

Current research on “The Nine Songs” focuses mostly on literary and ideological aspects, while relatively few studies have been conducted from the perspective of symbolic anthropology. Authors [1–4] compared the differences and similarities between different translations in terms of translation methods, imagery treatment, and retention of cultural elements, and explored the diversity and complexity of the English translation of *Chu ci*. Li and Zhang [5] hold the view that Hawkes’ translation faithfully reproduces Qu Yuan’s great national sentiments, while Yang Xianyi’s translation not only conveys Qu Yuan’s national sentiments but also speaks of his own patriotic thoughts. They think that this kind of multi-level and three-dimensional translation of Chinese cultural classics with ideology as the core can provide an important reference for Chinese cultural classics to “go global” and should encourage the translation of cultural classics with both ideology and literature so as to produce richer and fuller research achievements.

Huang [6] thinks that symbolic anthropology focuses on the symbolic meaning of cultural symbols and considers them as an important tool for human beings to express their thoughts, emotions, and values. Through the interpretation of cultural symbols, we can have a deeper understanding of the cultural psychology and spiritual world of a nation. This study focuses on the theme of human-divine communication in “The Nine Songs” and reveals the cultural connotations behind the symbols by analyzing the natural symbols, animal symbols, artifact symbols, and behavioral symbols in it. This study helps deepen the understanding of the literary value of “The Nine Songs” and provides new perspectives on the religious beliefs, values, and social structure of the Chu people.

2.2. Theoretical basis

As for the definition of “symbol”, the Western anthropological community has not yet formed a unified view, but Geertz [7] and Turner [8] hold the view that symbols have a variety of forms and functions. Symbols are similar to metaphors, either through similarity or by means of real or imagined associations, typically represent, reproduce and evoke memories of something. And Geertz [7] closely combines “meaning” and “symbol”, believing that “the symbol is the carrier of the idea, and the idea is the meaning carried by the symbol.”

As far as the production of cultural symbols, Wang [9] contends that “Influenced by the heterogeneity in the objective physical world, there are differences in the structure of people’s thoughts and understanding, which are reflected in culture and then form the nation-specific cultural symbols”. Symbolic anthropology believes that cultural symbols are an important carrier of human thoughts, emotions, and values. However, they do not exist in isolation. Instead, they are interrelated and together constitute an organic meaning system. At the same time, this meaning system is deeply rooted in a specific cultural background and is

inseparable from the cultural context. Therefore, this paper considers the natural symbols, animal symbols, artifact symbols, and behavioral symbols in “The Nine Songs” as cultural symbols and interprets them in the context of the Chu culture, exploring how they reflect the religious beliefs, values, and social structure of the Chu people.

3. An overview of Chu’s shamanic culture

This section provides an overall picture of shamanism in the ancient kingdom of Chu, a vassal state of the Zhou dynasty (1046–256 B.C.E.), focusing on the shamans’ status, functions, and influence in Chu.

3.1. The status and functions of shamans in the state of Chu

According to “Chu yu 楚语” in *Guo yu* (国语) or *Discourses of the States*, the male shaman was called “wizard” (覡, *xi*), and the female shaman was called “witch” (巫, *wu*) (“在男曰覡, 在女曰巫”). Another classic titled *Shuowen jiezi* (说文解字, *An Analytical Dictionary of Characters*) says that “Wizards can serve divinities in a solemn manner” (“覡, 能齐肃事神明者”). Wei [10] notes in *Guo yu* that “Witches and wizards are those who are able to see ghosts” (“巫覡, 见鬼者”). It can be seen that wizards and witches are people who deal with ghosts and divinities. Song and Zhang [11] also point out in *Chu Customs* that the nature of sorcery is a kind of fictional supernatural power, and shamans are people with unique natural endowments or who master the ability of some supernatural magic power, especially the ability to communicate with humans and divinities. The purpose of practicing witchcraft, in short, is to communicate with the divine through specific rituals and behaviors and to pray for their blessings and guidance.

The Chu people from the end of the Spring and Autumn period through the Warring States period showed great respect for the shamans’ natural endowment and supernatural magic power. It can be verified from an account in “Chu yu” of *Guo yu*, namely Guan Yifu’s reply to the king of Chu that “There are the people who are spiritually attentive and respectful. Their talents are appropriate to heaven and earth, their wisdom shines far and wide, their eyes are bright and discerning, and their hearing is sensitive and reaches out to the four quarters of the world. And it is for this reason that divinities have come to them!” (“民之精爽不携贰者, 而又能齐肃衷正, 其智能上下比义, 其圣能光远宣朗, 其明能光照之, 其聪能月彻之, 如是则明神降之”). Shamans in Chu had a very high status, and the Chu people called them “spirits” (灵). It can be seen that the Chu people regarded witches as divinities.

Generally speaking, the functions of witches and wizards are divining with respect to the appointment of officials, medical prescription, praying for rain, disaster avoidance, entertaining the divine, inviting the divine to come down, cursing, fortune-telling, face reading, performing sorcery songs and dances, etc. Moreover, in the period when shamanism was extremely prevalent in the state of Chu, the functions of Chu shamans included not only the above categories but also some activities that the shamans of the Central Plains in the north were not engaged in, such as inviting souls, harnessing ghosts, and falling in love with the divine.

3.2. Influence of shamans in the state of Chu

Witches and wizards were very active in the social life of Chu, and their influence was far-reaching. As He [12] points out, they have influenced and contributed to the politics, literature, art, dance, and medicine of Chu to varying degrees, so that the culture of Chu was relatively more developed than that of other states in China. The religious theory system of the state of Chu also developed to a high level and was vigorously promoted by the ruling class, who regarded sorcery as a tool for consolidating power and strengthened the people's belief in sorcery by organizing grand rituals, thus making the sorcery prevalent in the state of Chu. As a result, shamanism spread among the people and penetrated into their lives.

In the political sphere, shamans often act as a medium of communication between heaven and earth, participate in the formulation of major national decisions, and exert a subtle influence on the direction of policy. For example, in the face of natural disasters or war decisions, shamans' divinations and prophecies often sway the monarch's decisions. In terms of literature and art, the shamanic culture enriches the creation materials of *Chu ci*, and many works in it incorporate elements of witchcraft rituals, myths, and legends, making the anthology unique in style and rich in emotion and becoming a treasure in Chinese classical literature. The Chu art and dance are also influenced by shamanic culture. The ritual dances of Chu, such as those described in "The Nine Songs", led by witches and wizards, integrate religious mysteries and secular emotions and display unique artistic charms. In terms of medicine and drugs, wizards are not only diagnosticians of diseases but also collectors and users of herbs, and they utilize natural plants, minerals, and other resources for treatment, accumulate a certain amount of medical knowledge, and thus contribute to the development of medicine in Chu.

4. Symbolic analysis of human-divine communication in "The Nine Songs"

The unique shamanic cultural background and rich symbolic system in "The Nine Songs" provide important clues for us to understand the spiritual world of the Chu people. As a concentrated manifestation of the witchcraft culture in Chu, "The Nine Songs" demonstrates the religious concept of the Chu people, which is a mixture of human and divine, and it integrates the Chu people's emotions, beliefs, and social life by means of its unique art form. In the song cycle, natural symbols, animal symbols, artifact symbols, and behavioral symbols are intertwined together to build an art world full of mysterious colors and romantic feelings. These symbols do not exist in isolation but form a complex and multi-layered network of meaning through specific combinations and applications. For example, the "flying dragon 飞龙" symbolizes divine power, showing the imagination of the Chu people on the extraordinary ability of the gods. These symbols not only serve the theme of "human-divine communication", but also deeply reflect the Chu people's knowledge of nature, life, and society.

The human-divine communication in *Chu ci* is usually understood simply as a religious act in the shamanic ceremony, but if we look into the text of "The Nine

Songs”, we can see that the symbolism of human-divine communication is much more than that and that its connotations are rich and complex. Although the human-divine communication is mainly carried out in the shamanic ceremony, its symbolism is not limited to the religious level but also involves the values of the Chu people; even in terms of religious significance, its manifestation and connotation vary according to specific situations. For example, in the ritual of sacrificing to Donghuang Taiyi 东皇太一, the human-divine communication is manifested as a solemn religious activity, while in the love story of “Xiang Jun 湘君” and “Xiang Furen 湘夫人”, it embodies the pursuit of beautiful feelings and thinking about the meaning of life of the Chu people. In the works of *Chu ci*, the theme of human-divine communication is often closely connected with the spiritual world, emotional expression, and social life of the Chu people, and thus has an extremely important cultural significance. For example, the love story of Xiang Jun and Xiang Furen in “Xiang Jun” is not only a depiction of the emotions between humans and divinities but also a metaphor for the concept of marriage and the social structure of the Chu people. The image of the mountain god in “Shan gui 山鬼” reflects the Chu people’s reverence for the power of nature and their feelings about the impermanence of life.

Therefore, the interpretation of the symbols in “The Nine Songs” helps to reveal their literary value and provides a new perspective for exploring the deeper connotations of Chu culture. By analyzing the symbolism of these symbols and their cultural functions, we can understand the spiritual world and cultural psychology of the Chu people in a more comprehensive way. In this paper, we will take Hawkes’ translation of *Chu ci* as an example, systematically analyze the symbols of the theme of “human-divine communication” in “The Nine Songs” in terms of natural symbols, animal symbols, artifact symbols, and behavioral symbols, and further explore their cultural connotations. Through this study, we hope to deepen the understanding of the song cycle, expand the research horizons of *Chu ci*, and promote the understanding of Chu culture as well as ancient Chinese culture.

4.1. Natural symbols

Qu [13] believes that from the perspective of symbolic anthropology, the entire natural world of space, time, and natural objects is full of various specific expressions of natural symbols, which can be used to express all things and phenomena in nature, such as plants, celestial bodies, natural phenomena, and so on. For example, when people regard the rose as a symbolic form, they connect it with love, and then it becomes a symbol of love. Similarly, the sun symbolizes light and hope, the moon symbolizes beauty and tranquility, and trees represent life and growth. All of them are the result of people’s artificial agreement based on the similarity or correlation between certain features or attributes of things and the objects they represent. Among the natural symbols, some of them are the embodiment of various divine roles, reflecting the relationship between human beings and the supernatural. Some have become the bridge for human beings to recognize and understand the universe and other natural phenomena, reflecting the relationship of dependence between human beings and nature. Some others are the symbolic codes for human beings to recognize certain socio-cultural phenomena,

reflecting the special relationship between human beings themselves.

Let us take “the sun and the moon 日月” as an example. It is from the couplet “蹇将憺兮寿宫，与日月兮齐光” in “Yunzhong Jun 云中君”, and Hawkes [14] translates it into “He is going to rest in the House of Life./His brightness is like that of the sun and moon”. Jin et al. [15], a modern scholar of *Chu ci*, sums up the theme of “Yunzhong Jun” very vividly as follows: “This is the lord within the clouds and the image of a dignified god who comes and goes swiftly, who travels the wide world, whose light is aligned with the sun and the moon, and whose might extends to the four seas”. In the conception of the ancients, the sun and the moon are the most dazzling celestial bodies in the sky, and their light shines on the earth and nourishes all things. Comparing Yunzhong Jun’s light with that of the sun and the moon emphasizes the vastness and limitlessness of Yunzhong Jun’s divine power. Moreover, as the lord within the clouds, Yunzhong Jun controls natural phenomena such as clouds, rain, thunder, and lightning, which have a vital impact on agricultural production and people’s lives. Thus, it symbolizes that his divine power is like the sun and the moon, is omnipresent at all times, and is of great significance.

On the one hand, the mountains and rivers in Chu are magnificent, and the Chu people are full of reverence for nature and regard the sun and the moon as the supreme deities. The fact that Yunzhong Jun’s brightness is like that of the sun and the moon demonstrates their worship of nature and their unique understanding of the order of the universe. The fact that the Chu people believe the divinities coexist with human beings and that Yunzhong Jun’s radiance shines with the sun and the moon demonstrates the Chu’s concept of “human-divine mixture”. On the other hand, the Chu culture advocates gorgeous and romantic things and pursues bright and brilliant imagery. The image of Yunzhong Jun is not only sacred and majestic but also represents the Chu people’s desire for beautiful things. The eternity of the sun and the moon symbolizes the immortality of life; the fact that Yunzhong Jun’s brightness is like that of the sun and the moon implies the desire of the Chu people to transcend the limitations of life and pursue eternity.

4.2. Animal symbols

Animal symbols refer to the images or kinds of animals that are given specific symbolic meanings in a particular cultural context. These animals can be either wild animals, domestic animals, pets, and other realities, such as lions, tigers, elephants, dogs, cats, etc., or imaginary animals such as dragons and phoenixes. As Bai and Du [16] point out, animals themselves are not considered symbols, but when human beings use animals to express their thoughts and feelings and reflect the world’s conditions, then animals have a symbolic meaning. They have been given rich symbolic meanings because of their own characteristics, behavioral habits, or association with culture, religion, myths, and other factors. For example, the lion is often used to symbolize majesty, bravery, and leadership because of its majestic image and powerful strength, while the dog has become a symbol of loyalty and friendship because of its qualities of loyalty, friendliness, and bravery in Chinese culture. Ma [17] contends that the symbolism of the animal symbols is often closely related to certain features or attributes of animals, and the same animal may have

different symbolisms in different cultures and regions, reflecting the uniqueness and diversity of different cultures.

Let us take the “flying dragon 飞龙” as an example. It is from the verse “驾飞龙兮北征，遭吾道兮洞庭” in “Xiang Jun 湘君”, and Hawkes [14] renders it into “North I go, drawn by my flying dragon,/steering my course to the Dong-ting lake”. As sacred creatures in ancient Chinese mythology, flying dragons symbolize infinite power and majesty in China. Xiang Jun’s control of the flying dragon means that he has mastered this powerful natural force and demonstrates his divine majesty and extraordinary abilities. At the same time, flying dragons are often associated with emperors and dignitaries in feudal China, so Xiang Jun’s mastery of flying dragons symbolizes his noble status as a deity. This combination of divine power and honor makes Xiang Jun’s image even more majestic and inviolable. In addition, the flying dragon is able to travel between heaven and earth and transcend the limitations of the mortal world. By riding the flying dragon to the north, Xiang Jun is not only searching for the traces of Xiang Furen but also demonstrating his spirit of transcending the worldly constraints and pursuing freedom and love. This transcendence enables Xiang Jun to escape from the shackles of reality and bravely pursue his own love and ideal. The speed and power of the flying dragon also symbolize Xiang Jun’s determination and enthusiasm in his pursuit and his willingness to give up everything in order to pursue his beloved.

On the one hand, the act of being “drawn by my flying dragon” itself reflects the shamanic culture. Dong [18] thinks that in the shamanic ritual in Chu, shamans often simulate the behavior of divinities through dancing, singing, and symbolic actions, telling the message of human beings to the heavens and praying for divine revelation from the heavens in order to achieve the purpose of communicating with the divine. The picture of Xiang Jun “drawn by my flying dragon” may be an artistic reproduction of the wizard playing the role of the divine and simulating their behavior in the ceremony. This way of expression enhances the mysterious color of *Chu ci* and vividly reproduces the religious practice of the Chu people in communicating with the divine through the shamanic ritual. On the other hand, the scene of “North I go, drawn by my flying dragon” is full of romanticism. The flying dragon soars in the sky, and Xiang Jun rides it across the mountains and rivers, demonstrating the Chu people’s yearning for freedom, power, and a better life. The animal symbol of the flying dragon is closely connected with the meaning of the whole verse line, which creates a vivid picture of Xiang Jun’s pursuit of love and display of divinity.

4.3. Artifact symbols

Artifact symbols are those artifacts that are given a specific meaning or symbolic function. In daily life, artifacts mainly fulfill people’s needs with their practical functions, but when these artifacts are endowed with additional cultural, social, or symbolic meanings, they are transformed into artifact symbols. These symbols may represent an individual’s identity, status, and taste, or they may carry a certain cultural, historical, or religious allegory. For example, jade artifacts such as the jade disk (玉璧) with a hole in the center and octagonal jade badge (玉琮) are

symbols of the status of the ancient nobility, and they are also endowed with beautiful symbols such as good luck and peace of mind. Wang [19] argues that humans express a complex thing in a simple form by giving a symbolic meaning to artifact symbols. The formation of artifact symbols is a product of human culture and social development, which enriches our material world and reflects human spiritual pursuit and social change.

Let us take “pipes 竽” and “zithers 瑟” as examples. They are from the sentence “陈竽瑟兮浩倡” in “Donghuang Taiyi 东皇太一”, and Hawkes [14] translates it into “Then, as pipes and zithers join in, the sound grows shriller”. The appearance of pipes represents the devotion and reverence to the divine, symbolizing the solemnity and sanctity of the sacrifice. And the use of the zithers embodies the Chu people’s love of music and symbolizes the harmonious coexistence and joyful gathering between humans and divinities. As Sun [20] points out, on sacrificial occasions, these two musical instruments, together with the qin-lute 琴 as well as the bell-pan 钟磬, are the highest ritual specifications. The verse “as pipes and zithers join in, the sound grows shriller” vividly describes the grand ceremony and joyful atmosphere of the Chu people’s sacrifice to Donghuang Taiyi 东皇太一 by depicting the display and performance of pipes and zithers, as well as the joyful scene of people singing loudly. These musical instruments add musical beauty to the ritual and also symbolize the communication and exchange between humans and divinities, as well as people’s yearning and prayers for a better life.

The melodious tone of pipes and zithers creates a solemn atmosphere for the ceremony and symbolizes the Chu people’s devotion to and reverence for the divine. The mournful singing and the playing of pipes and zithers reflect the Chu people’s love of music and dance and show their unique way of communicating with the divine through art forms. Moreover, this ritual is not only a religious activity but also a concentrated manifestation of the aesthetic taste of the Chu people. Chu culture advocates a gorgeous and romantic art style, and the ensemble of pipes and zithers and the mournful singing vividly expresses the aesthetic pursuit of the Chu people. Through music and dance, the Chu people can express their respect for the divine and convey their passionate pursuit of vitality and a better life. This combination of religious rituals and artistic expression deeply reflects the unique charm and spiritual connotation of the Chu culture.

4.4. Behavioral symbols

Chen et al. [21] argue that behavioral symbols refer to behavioral actions with ideographic and symbolic meanings, which often have relatively standardized patterns and are conventionally used in specific scenes. It can be a visual, auditory, or audiovisual manifestation of an external phenomenon that triggers the perceiver to recognize its main content through episodic displays or specific symbolic symbols. For example, in many cultures, a handshake is a behavioral symbol that indicates friendship, cooperation, or reconciliation. When two people shake hands, they send a message of willingness to establish a bond with each other or to reach some kind of consensus through this action. A behavioral symbol is an indispensable basic element in the expression and communication of the psychological activities of the actors,

which carries the information sent by the two communicators and has the function of reference and communication. It reflects the motives, desires, demands, positions, gestures, and other psychological activities of the actor, which enables the perceiver to perceive the meaning of various behaviors.

Let us take “whirling and dipping in flight 翩飞”, “birds 翠曾”, and “dancing 会舞” as examples. They are from the couplet “翩飞兮翠曾, 展诗兮会舞” in “Dong Jun 东君”, and Hawkes [14] renders it as “Whirling and dipping like birds in flight, unfolding the words in time to the dancing”. In Dong Jun’s sacrificial ceremony, the behavioral symbol “whirling and dipping in flight” symbolizes the lightness and vitality of Dong Jun as the god of the sun and also signifies the spreading of light and hope. The “birds” implies that the dance is as light and flexible as a kingfisher, flying high in the air. It depicts the gracefulness of the dance and symbolizes the sanctity and nobility of Dong Jun, who flies freely between heaven and earth like a kingfisher. The behavioral symbol “dancing” depicts the scene that many people participate in the dance together, and the scene emphasizes the collective and coordinated nature of the dance. The fact that people express their gratitude and praise to Dong Jun through collective dance symbolizes that the god is widely worshipped and admired by the people, and it also shows the grandeur and enthusiasm of the sacrificial scene. The verse line vividly depicts the dancing spectacle during the sacrifice to Dong Jun, showing the Chu people’s reverence and praise for him. Through the use of behavioral symbols such as whirling and dipping in flight, birds, and dancing, the poet skillfully conveys the joy and vitality of Dong Jun, as well as the people’s pursuit of and yearning for light.

The verse line is not only a vivid depiction of the sacrificial scene of Dong Jun, the god of the sun, but also embodies the worship and sacrificial practices of the Chu people for the gods of nature, showing the close connection between human and nature, human and divine. The close combination of the light and agile dance and the poem highlights the aesthetic concepts and artistic creativity of the Chu people. In addition, the poem also symbolizes the joy and vitality of Dong Jun as well as the spread of light and hope, reflecting the deep understanding and allegorical expression of the Chu people towards nature and the divine. Finally, the collective and coordinated nature of dancing together shows the social cohesion and collective spirit of the Chu people, which helps to strengthen their ties with each other and their ability to work together.

5. Concluding remarks

Through an in-depth examination of the elaborate natural symbols, animal symbols, artifact symbols, and behavioral symbols in “The Nine Songs”, this study reveals the complexity and diversity of the symbol system in the shamanic culture of Chu and profoundly explains the central role of these symbols in the rituals of communication between humans and divinities. These symbols are not only the medium through which the Chu people communicate with the divine but also a profound reflection of their spiritual world, social customs, and values. The use of these symbols gives the shamanic rituals a strong sacred color, enhances the solemnity of the rituals and the psychological resonance of the participants, and

provides an inexhaustible source of inspiration for later literary creations. From Qu Yuan's "Li Sao" to Tang poems and Song lyrics to novels of the Ming and Qing dynasties, these symbols have been continuously given new connotations and vitality and have become indispensable elements in ancient Chinese literature.

The symbol system in the shamanic culture of *Chu ci* is the crystallization of the wisdom of the Chu people and an important, indispensable material for scholars to study the religion, culture, and society of ancient China. They are like a mirror reflecting the unique cultural outlook and spiritual pursuit of the Chu people, providing valuable clues and perspectives for us to understand the religious beliefs, social structure, and cultural inheritance of ancient China. As for Chinese culture, the present study can re-establish the unique position of Chu culture in Chinese civilization and provide historical references for the reconstruction of cultural identity in rural revitalization (e.g., Qu Yuan's ritual activities) by revealing the social integration mechanism in the shamanic rituals. As for the Western world, this study can facilitate cross-cultural practices, such as the German Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra's adaptation of "The Nine Songs" chant into the therapeutic symphony "Chu Soul" and Google AI Lab's development of a "digital shaman" psychological intervention program. These revelations show that the Chu culture is not only an archaeological object but also a resource for solving the dilemmas of modernity, and its wisdom of constructing meaning through symbols and linking individuals and communities provides an ancient yet novel solution to the cultural conflicts and spiritual crises in the era of globalization.

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