NEW DISCOURSE OF THE SHENNONG SYMBOL IN VIETNAM

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ABSTRACT

Objective: Researching the contemporary discourse surrounding the iconic figure of Shennong (a long-standing symbol in Vietnamese culture) aims to shed light on how this age-old symbol is being redefined in the present era. This research endeavors to provide insights for scholars and decision-makers, enabling them to generate fresh narratives for old symbols, and infuse new life into traditional icons to better serve the demands of modern life.

Methods: Studying the new discourse surrounding the Shennong symbol in Vietnam requires an interdisciplinary scientific approach, incorporating fields such as cultural studies, literature, Sino-Nom studies, and communication studies. In the process of addressing this issue, the author utilizes research methods such as textual analysis, field research, text analysis, comparative analysis, logic-historical analysis, harmonizing contemporary and historical perspectives, and analytical synthesis. These research methods are consistently applied by the author to provide a comprehensive and specific approach suitable for the current research task.

Results: Ancient records also affirm the blood relations of Shennong with significant figures in Vietnamese mythology, such as Lac Long Quan, Au Co, and their descendants, the Hung kings. However, cultural expressions related to the figure of Shennong over the past 30 years (since 1991) have shown that the meaning of the Shennong symbol is evolving to better align with the demands of the modern era. Consequently, the significance of the Shennong symbol associated with agriculture still leaves an imprint on cultural practices, extending to symbolize the spirit of labor and building a new life in the contemporary age. Moreover, the Shennong symbol now holds a new meaning: a symbol of national unity.

Conclusions: In Vietnam, legends and records related to Shennong, along with the religious practices and worship of this deity, traditionally focused on the symbol's significance for agriculture, embodying the deep agrarian spirit of the Vietnamese people. In the modern era, the Shennong symbol in Vietnam has expanded its meaning to encompass the spirit of labor in building a new life in a different age. Simultaneously, it is gradually becoming a symbol of national unity. This reflects the Vietnamese people's aspiration to utilize the Shennong symbol for constructing a more prosperous future and for fostering a sense of connection and unity among the diverse Vietnamese communities in various regions.

Keywords: symbols, new discourse, shennong, national cohesion, Vietnam.
NOVO DISCURSO DO SÍMBOLO DE SHENNONG NO VIETNÃ

RESUMO

Objetivo: Pesquisar o discurso contemporâneo em torno da figura icônica de Shennong (um símbolo de longa data na cultura vietnamita) tem como objetivo lançar luz sobre como este símbolo milenar está sendo redefinido na era atual. Esta pesquisa se esforça para fornecer insights para estudiosos e tomadores de decisão, permitindo-lhes gerar novas narrativas para símbolos antigos, e infundir nova vida em ícones tradicionais para melhor atender às demandas da vida moderna.

Métodos: Estudar o novo discurso em torno do símbolo Shennong no Vietnã requer uma abordagem científica interdisciplinar, incorporando campos como estudos culturais, literatura, estudos Sino-Nom, e estudos de comunicação. No processo de abordar esta questão, o autor utiliza métodos de pesquisa como análise textual, pesquisa de campo, análise de texto, análise comparativa, análise lógico-histórica, harmonização de perspectivas contemporâneas e históricas, e síntese analítica. Esses métodos de pesquisa são aplicados consistentemente pelo autor para fornecer uma abordagem abrangente e específica adequada para a tarefa de pesquisa atual.

Resultados: Registros antigos também afirmam as relações sanguíneas de Shennong com figuras significativas na mitologia vietnamita, como L c Long Quan, Au Co, e seus descendentes, os reis Hung. No entanto, expressões culturais relacionadas com a figura de Shennong nos últimos 30 anos (desde 1991) mostraram que o significado do símbolo Shennong está evoluindo para melhor se alinhar com as demandas da era moderna. Consequentemente, o significado do símbolo Shennong associado à agricultura ainda deixa uma marca nas práticas culturais, estendendo-se para simbolizar o espírito de trabalho e construir uma nova vida na era contemporânea. Além disso, o símbolo Shennong tem agora um novo significado: um símbolo de unidade nacional.

Conclusões: No Vietnã, lendas e registros relacionados a Shennong, juntamente com as práticas religiosas e adoração desta divindade, tradicionalmente focados no significado do símbolo para a agricultura, incorporando o profundo espírito agrário do povo vietnamita. Na era moderna, o símbolo Shennong no Vietnã expandiu seu significado para abranger o espírito de trabalho na construção de uma nova vida em uma idade diferente. Simultaneamente, está gradualmente a tornar-se um símbolo de unidade nacional. Isso reflete a aspiração do povo vietnamita de utilizar o símbolo Shennong para construir um futuro mais próspero e para promover um sentimento de conexão e unidade entre as diversas comunidades vietnamitas em várias regiões.

Palavras-chave: símbolos, novo discurso, shennong, coesão nacional, Vietnã.

1 INTRODUCTION

Shennong, the king in the South of China, was first described in legend fairly early on. This legend holds that Shennong, who is also the mythical god of agriculture and medicine, is skilled at both agriculture and practicing medicine.

Shennong is not thought to be connected to medicine in Vietnam, only to agriculture. Due to Vietnam's long history of agriculture, the reverence for agriculture has been firmly imprinted in the minds and hearts of the Vietnamese people. Since the Vietnamese people have valued agriculture for thousands of years, the character Shennong has arisen in Vietnamese culture as a representation of that value. This
symbolic connotation is strongly expressed in both religious practices to worship this god and legends concerning Shennong.

Shennong is also regarded as the progenitor of the Vietnamese people in Vietnam. Through historical accounts and religious practices, this symbolic meaning is represented, and it is expressed even more explicitly today. On the road to industrialization and modernization, Vietnam is making progress. As a result, agriculture no longer has a special status. In the modern context, the Shennong symbol frequently refers to the Vietnamese people's ancestors, serving as a sign of shared national identity.

Records and research on Shennong have been done by many generations of Vietnamese people. The earliest can be mentioned as the book Linh Nam Chich (completed around the 15th century, during the Tran Dynasty) introducing Shennong. Since then, research on the Shennong symbol has not made many new contributions, basically confirming that this symbol is associated with the agricultural spirit of the Vietnamese people and with the ancestral meaning of the Vietnamese people. In the current situation of industrial and service sectors... development and agriculture losing their unique position, the symbolic meaning of Shennong is evolving in the direction of emphasizing its role as the ancestral figure of the Vietnamese people, as a symbol of national unity. This new discourse helps the Scorpio symbol continue to affirm its value and contribution to today's life, but from the beginning of the 21st century until now there has been no research on this issue.

1.1 MAIN CONTENT

The meaning of the Shennong symbol in Vietnam can be identified through bibliographies (especially ancient bibliographies) and cultural activities (especially religious activities). When comparing the meaning of the Shennong symbol in the past (feudal period) with the present time, we can see the new discourse of this symbol.

2 LITERATURE REVIEW

The earliest research by scientists on the character Shennong in Vietnam was carried out around the beginning of the twentieth century. We can mention studies such as the work "Religious Beliefs and Practices of the Vietnamese" (published in 1957 - 1958) by priest Père Léopold Michel Cadière (1869–1955, French) that mentioned the worship of the Shen Nong, at the Nam Giao piano; The study "Études sur la politique
Historique de la langue Annamite" (B.E.F.E.O.T.XII, 1912) by Henri Paul Gaston Maspero (1883-1945, French) describes the worship of Shen Nong. These studies mainly stop at describing the worship of Shen Nong as a religious phenomenon in social life without going into depth describing the symbolic meaning of the Shennong symbol.

The book "The Source of Circuits and Culture of Bach Viet 百越源流与文" (1955) by Luo Xiang Lin 羅香林 (1906 - 1978, Taiwan) cites ancient books such as Guangzhou Ky, Book of Jin, Book of Sui with records about the custom of casting and worshiping bronze drums of the Vietnamese people has a few details discussing the joint worship of the God of Agriculture.

In Vietnam, at the beginning of the twentieth century, some research works on the worship of gods and miracles, which more or less mentioned aspects such as worship, rituals... of Shen Nong such as: "An Nam Phong custom books, primary school customs books 安南 風俗 冊, 小學 風俗 冊" compiled by Mai Vien Doan Trien in the 2nd year of Duy Tan (1908). Books written in Chinese characters, currently stored at the Institute of Sino-Nom Studies, symbols VHv.2665 and VHv.153. Books about ancient customs, beliefs, and practices of Vietnam: Tet, communal houses, shrines, temples, pagodas, worshiping gods, praying for blessings, attending funerals, and festivals. In 1944, Nguyen Van Huyen published the book "Divine Worship in the South and "Southern Civilization", which provided a lot of interesting information about the worship of gods in Vietnam, including the gods of Vietnam. Residents grow wet rice. The author of the work said he relied on many sources, including Sino-Nom documents.

In the second half of the 20th century, debates about whether Shen Nong originated from Vietnamese or Chinese by Professors Kim Dinh, Mong Van Thong, Dinh Gia Khanh... showed the attraction of the issue. Most of the comments start from the records in "Complete Annals of Dai Viet (大越史記全書)", compiled by the History Office of the Later Le Dynasty, recording Vietnamese history from the legendary Kinh Duong Vuong era in 2879 BC to 1675 during the reign of King Le Gia Tong. This history was engraved and printed in its entirety and published for the first time in the year Dinh Suu, the 18th year of Chinh Hoa, the reign of King Le Hy Tong. In the Foreword by Ngo Sy Lien, he noted the appearance of Shen Nong as an ancestor of Vietnam's ancestors: Dai Viet is in the south of Ngu Linh, so heaven has divided the boundaries between North and South. My ancestors were descended from the Shennong family, so they were born true lords and could be emperors of each side along with the Northern Dynasty.
At the beginning of the 21st century, the word "Gods, people and the land of Vietnam" (Dai, 2014) had relatively objective comments and assessments on aspects of spiritual life, beliefs and the system of god worship in Vietnam. His work has been researched from many sources such as Vietnamese, French... reflecting the phenomenon of god worship and the spiritual life of Vietnamese people, but what he is concerned about is still contact with thought. Han Nom data for more in-depth comments and analysis.

The changes in the meaning of the Shen Nong symbol in recent times is a new phenomenon and has never received much research attention. Those changes are new expressions of the Shen Nong symbol, bringing the breath of Vietnam into the new era. Based on the inheritance of these documents, the authors focus on the new discourse of the Shennong symbol in Vietnam.

3 METHODS

To explore new discourses of the Shennong symbol in Vietnam, this research will be based on Sino-Nom documents, mainly bibliographies on history, culture, beliefs, and customs... stored at the Institute. Research on Han Nom, some major archives and supplement local Han Nom fieldwork documents. In addition, field research and information about contemporary cultural activities will also be important data to help draw scientific conclusions.

Research is carried out based on main research methods such as cultural research (studying the Shennong phenomenon in historical time and the space of social existence); Literary research methods (analyzing works about Shen Nong to sketch the god's portrait in spiritual life as well as the imagination of the god in Vietnamese literature); Sino-Nom research methods (collecting, surveying, and translating Sino-Nom texts with cross-references about Shennong); hermeneutic method (interpreting texts, identifying discourses expressed through the Shennong symbol) field research method (collecting documents, comparing situations in documents and authentic fieldwork worship of Shen Nong).

In the process of approaching the problem, the author uses research methods such as textual studies, fieldwork, text analysis, comparison, logic-history, unity between synchronic and diachronic perspectives, and analysis-synthesis... These research methods are applied by the author in a consistent dialectical manner to provide a way
4 RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

4.1 THE MEANING OF THE SHENNONG SYMBOL IN FEUDAL VIETNAMESE CULTURE

It is possible to base it on recorded documents and some traditional religious activities related to Shennong to determine the meaning of the Shennong symbol. In these data, the character Shennong is associated with two meanings: agriculture and the ancestor of the Vietnamese people.

In the sense of symbolizing agriculture, the character Shennong is often perceived as the ruler of grain, land, and crops. Cultural activities in the presence of Shennong are often associated with formal religious activities, including the Tich Dien ceremony.

Records of ancient Vietnamese folk culture are written in Chinese and Nom. Currently, there are hundreds of books in Chinese and Nom containing records about Shennong preserved in the book warehouses of the Institute of Han-Nom Research and the National Library of Vietnam. The vast majority of these writings attest to Shennong’s status as the deity in charge of agricultural matters.

Shennong is also assigned many tasks that are important to humans. Grain governance is of course the most mentioned task. The book 一本神農. The latest edition of Shennong's Laughing [本神農醮科 A prayer to worship Shennong, recorded by Hoang Dieu Kinh 黃妙經, handwritten in the year of Tan Suu (?), Institute of Sino-Nom Studies Library, code ST.7441]. Faculty called Shennong's title as 上世五谷神農判官 Higher Grain Judge Shennong. “Supreme cereals” refers to the god's important role in cereals (5 types of food including 穀 tuc - rice, 豆 beans - beans, 麻 ma - sesame, 麦 barley - barley, 稻 tao - Rice. Song Dike first part of the incense to worship, asked the Emperor Shennong of grain land to open the fields of Hoa Coc Tien Quan... …(Meaning: Put your hands together, bow your head, burn incense, and invite the Shennong Emperor, the god in charge of grain, to open the fields). Ruling over rice, Shennong also governs the soul of rice. In the text 收禾魂朝夜 Autumn and Soul Trieu Da (ST.5160: record the...
book codes stored at the Institute of Sino-Nom Studies Library), folk records worship rituals early in the day to collect rice souls and pray for good harvests, including the ritual of 神农鬼存禾法Thanh Nong Demon Hoa Hoa Dharma (Shennong calls the rice soul back). The name Shennong (god of agriculture) itself in the cultural context of countries that grow rice and barley... also speaks to the god's role in governing this grain.

It seems that to ensure a favorable and bountiful harvest, Shennong was also assigned by the people to manage the weather and eliminate insect pests (locust plague). There are three documents confirming the god's role in controlling wind and rain, namely

一本神農醮科 Nhat Nong Tieu Khoa written by 黃妙 經 Hoang Dieu Kinh (ST.7441),
一本神農醮 科 The first edition of Shennong's Laughing Faculty copied by 黃妙想 Hoang Dieu Tuong (ST. 9193) and the book 供神農科 Chur Nong's Laughing Khoa (ST.5955). There are two documents affirming the role of protecting crops from locusts: the article 礼神農攘蝗虫 Lei Shennong Nhaong Hoang Insect (The Ceremony of Shennong to eliminate locusts) in the book 割斷重喪凶神新死科 Cat Doan Duong Mourning Than Hung Tan Tu Khoa (ST.1998/78, from pages 39a - 44b) and the poem 祭神農攘蝗虫文 Têt Shennong Hoang Trung Van (A tribute to Shennong praying for the harvest to avoid the locust disaster) in the book 法師各科供文 Dharma masters of all departments offer texts (ST.1998/77, pages 106 to 115). To praise Shennong's merits in blessing this favorable harvest, the poem 祭神農攘蝗虫文 Têt Shennong Hoang Trung Van (A tribute to Shennong praying for the crop to avoid the locust disaster) has the passage (page 108) wrote:

神功神功
編滿西東
中长北斗
萬事皆通
九天扶護
順方順從

Magical magic
West-east border
Bac Dau Middle School
Everything flows smoothly
Nine heavens bless
Obedience and compliance

(Meaning: God's merits/ Spread from west to east/ Forever with the North Star/ Everything goes well/ Heaven bless/ Everything goes well)

With such responsibility, Shennong is hailed by the people as a god with a very high status. The book 紅樓書意者 The fake book of the Red Chamber calls the god’s name Ban Hoan Shennong Dau Phu. Looking into the Taoist classics, one can find a clue to clarify the status of this title, which is the appearance of Dou Mau Nguyen Quan, also known as Dou Mau. According to the meaning of this name, Dau Mau means "mother of the Big Dipper constellation", or "mother of the stars" (because the Big Dipper is at the top of the stars). This is a god in the group with the highest status in the extremely rich and complex system of gods of Taoism. Book 太上玄靈斗姆大聖元君本命延生心經 Dau Thuong Huyen Linh Dau Mau Dai Thanh Nguyen Quan's Destiny and Birth Heart Sutra (正統道藏 Orthodox Taoist Treasury, 上海商务印书馆, 1923–1926, 影印版, 第11集, 345页) records about Dau Mau as follows: 老君曰: 斗姆上靈光圓大。天寶月中騫樹，色瑩瑯璃，玉兔長生，鑄鍊大藥。凡天地氣運休否，鬼怪，疾病傷生，爭訟橫撓，種種不祥，悉皆乖氣應期，失度者得度，安全胎育，治療病祚，濳施藥力，職重天醫，生諸天眾月之明，為北斗眾星之母

Lao Quan wrote: The mother-in-law is full of great light. Heavenly treasures and moons are surrounded by shield trees, beautiful lapis lazuli, jade rabbits of longevity, and spells to practice great medicine. All heaven and earth are blessed with good fortune, the sun and moon are filled with spirits, the sky and clouds are suddenly bright, the wind and cold are low and unpredictable, they are resistant to drought, water, and fire, and pestilences are fierce, even like sword soldiers and insects, ghosts, illness and disease,
disputes and conflicts, unknown species, all stages of Qi and Qi. Dau Mau is great medicine, the universal medicine, nourishes the five elements, ups and downs two qi, relieves stagnation and eliminates evil, destroys darkness and exorcises evil spirits, shields the qi and responds to the qi, satisfies the sultry, and is safe for benefiting the root, restoring the yang climate, giving birth to characters, tempering ghosts and gods, approving the cypress tree, nourishing the eight yangs, correcting the whole truth, summoning harmony and fate, hidden corpse medicinal power, holds the position of heavenly robe, gives birth to the moon and moon of the gods, and becomes the mother of the stars of the North. (Lao Quan said: The goddess in the sky radiates radiant light. In the moon, there is a shield tree, the color is sparkling like lapis lazuli, and there is a jade rabbit of immortality, refining precious medicine. Normally, the fortunes of heaven and earth stop moving, the sun, moon, and stars operate incorrectly, the sun and rain are bright and dark at the wrong time, the cold and hot winds are not at the right temperature, droughts, floods, and epidemics are disasters, to pestilence wars, evil goblins, illness and death, lawsuits and disturbances, everything that is not good is caused by negative energy. Mother Dou brought down the precious medicine, leaving behind the merits of curing diseases everywhere, harmonizing the five elements, adding and subtracting yin and yang, removing blockages, eliminating darkness and evil, and doing it at the right time. If the standards are lost, then make them meet the standards, preserve pregnancy, cure diseases, bring moisture to plants and trees, bring vitality to the weather, give birth to people and all things, transcend demons, and resolve to eliminate all negative aggregates, adds help to the eight yangs (of Buddhism), corrects the whole truth (of Taoism), brings harmony and prolongs good fortune, secretly works on medicine, takes on the responsibility of curing disease, produces light for the moon and stars, is the mother of the Northern Constellation). Looking at the role of Dau Mau, it can be said that there are similarities between the story of the jade rabbit and Dau Mau and Shennong's role as the founder of medicine, curing diseases, and saving people. So it can be speculated that the title Dau Tu is a title to honor the highest position in the Taoist system of gods, and plays an important role in making medicine, treating diseases, and saving people. This represents the incorporation of Shennong into the Taoist system of gods in a way that has never been seen before, even in Taoism's homeland of China.

Many fields worshiping Shennong, temples worshiping Shennong, and altars worshiping Shennong in communal houses and pagodas have been established by
Vietnamese people since feudal times. It can be said from Ta Va pagoda in Chi Lang commune, Trang Dinh district, Lang Son, temples and "graves" of Shennong around Thang Long Citadel, to Shennong temple in Long Hai town, Ba Ria Vung Tau …, almost every locality has the custom of worshiping Shennong. Nowadays, the relics of worshiping Shennong and the customs of the Shennong festival in northern villages have mostly disappeared, but if you search, you can still find more or less traces like mounds that were once places of worship, tombs, Shennong, and memories of games and book processions during the Shennong worship festival. In particular, most of the customs in Chinese and Nom scripts in villages and communes record the custom of worshiping the God of Nong. On the occasions of Ha Dien (going to the fields), Thuong Dien (going to the fields), and Thuong Tan (offering new rice), people read Shennong's rites, praising the merits of teaching people to cultivate and making people live in prosperity have enough of Shennong. For example, the following Shennong Oration:

Respectfully!

The Holy Immortal Shennong Thi, nine insect directions, dominates the omen. Take care of heaven and earth at the right time, do everything, and teach people how to cultivate. At that time, grace was bestowed on everyone, grace is high and immemorial. Passing on to the Lower Dien, Upper Dien, and Thuong Tan periods. Set up solemn ceremonies, people admire and hope for quality.

In the year of great heat, people looked up to live. When the harvest is good, the whole village can eat rice. The people of this time are happy, living in spring, fulfilling their wishes in the realm of life.

How great! The virtue of the Holy Emperor is extremely great.
Respectfully take my leave."

恭惟先聖神農氏之神端拱九重統臨兆應因天相地隨時施為斷舉 柔來教民種稼。當時之澤及者多，萬古之恩。承網極下田、上田、嘗新。斯再切設菲儀賀，民仰弘推陰質。

Home登於人壽之域。

萬賴！聖帝無窮之德也。
Surveying 86 documents of Han-Nom customs of Hung Yen province currently stored at the Institute of Han-Nom Studies, we found that out of 206 villages/villages/communes, 163 villages/communes (accounting for more than 79%) are related to the customs of worshiping Shennong: rituals for Shennong, rituals of worshiping Shennong, regulations on offerings to Shennong... Expanding the survey of Han Nom custom documents (being archived at the Research Institute Han Nom) such as Nghe An, Phuc Yen, Nam Dinh, Ha Dong (Ha Dong province: formerly a province, later part of Ha Tay province, now part of Hanoi City) all have regulations stipulating offerings to Shennong, Shennong funerals, Shennong worship ceremonies... However, the number of regulations related to Shennong is not as dense as the customs of Hung Yen province. But the Sino-Nom customary documents of those provinces on average account for 50-60% of the number of documents surveyed. This shows that the worship customs and beliefs of God Nong were quite common in rural Vietnam in the past. A survey of 40 Nghe An province declaration documents written in Nom shows that the belief in worshiping Shennong is very popular. The number of documents with regulations regulating or understanding and explaining about Shennong accounts for 29/40 documents. Shennong appears through these texts as a god of agriculture, teaching people to grow rice and blessing them with good harvests: "He said: "Our people grow rice to eat, or if we ever see If there is a worm or a grasshopper that causes harm, the people must make offerings to the previous Shennong, to the gods in the village they worship, and to the Earth Gods of those lands to eliminate those varieties so that they do not harm the rice plants/物罹礼 [VNv.32, sheet 128a] (Quynh Luu, Thanh Doan district, Thanh Doai village, declared the bookĕifique縣清段締清兌村冊", Institute of Sino-Nom Studies Library, code VNv.32). This text shows worshiping Shennong is always associated with worshiping locally worshiped gods and the Earth God (can be understood as Xa God) in planting, eliminating harmful insects, and maintaining good harvests.

Shennong's role in agriculture is also recognized through the President's Land ceremony of the feudal state of Vietnam. The worship of Shennong associated with the
Dien Dien ceremony is recorded many times in history books. This ceremony has a close relationship with the custom of worshiping Shennong because before that there was a Thai Lao ceremony to worship Shennong. Complete Annals of Dai Viet, part Ban Ky, volume 1, page 18a records the first time the Dien Dien ceremony was held on Vietnamese soil in 987, under the reign of King Le Dai Hanh: "Dinh Hoi in the 8th year (987). In the spring, the king plowed the fields on Doi Mountain for the first time and got a small pot of gold. I plowed again at Ban Hai mountain and got a small pot of silver, which I named Kim Ngan field." 丁亥八年春，帝初耕籍田，於隊山得金一小罐。又耕蟠海山，得銀一小罐，因名之曰金銀田. (Complete Annals of Dai Viet (大越史記全書) (Institute of Sino-Nom Studies Library, code VHv. 179/1-9, vol.1, p. 18a).

Complete History of Dai Viet also recorded that from then until 1514, there were 13 more times Vietnamese kings held the President's Field ceremony. To encourage agricultural development, King Ly Thai Tong himself plowed the land to get crops to make sticky rice offerings and for people to follow: "Mau Dan in the 5th year (1038), spring, February, The king went to Bo Hai gate to plow the land. Afterward, the Huu company cleared the grass to build the altar. The king personally offered sacrifices to Shennong, and after the offering, he took up the plow himself to perform the self-plowing ceremony. Some mandarins left and right said: "That is the farmer's job, why do you need to do that?" The king said: "If I don't plow myself, what can I use to make sticky rice offerings, and what can I use for people to follow?" Having said that, I pushed the plow three times and stopped".

The book Kham Dinh Viet Su Thong Giam Cuong Muc (19th century) also records this activity, even recording the building of an altar to worship Shennong. The ChinhBien section, volume 1 records the story of King Ly Thai Tong building an altar to worship Shennong in 1038, with the following content: "In the spring, in February, the king went to Bo Hai gate and ordered officials to build an altar to worship Shennong, he held the plow and performed the bowing ceremony. People on the left and right stopped and said: "That is the farmer's job, why do you need to do it?". The king said: "If I don't plow the fields myself, where will I have rice as an offering to worship at the temple and how can I set an example for the world?". At that time, the king had only plowed three furrows." 丁亥八年春，帝初耕籍田，於隊山得金一小罐。又耕蟠海山，得銀一小罐，因名之曰金銀田.
大越史記全書)Institute of Sino-Nom Studies Library, code VHv. 179/1-9, vol 1, p. 25b). About this event, the historian Ngo Si Lien (1400 - 1499) has been discussed as follows: "Thai Tong restored the ancient rituals, personally plowed the fields to set an example for the world, above to worship the temple, below to feed all the people, effectively governing the country led to a large population and wealth, so it replaced!"

After that, successive dynasties continued to celebrate the Tich Dien ceremony many times. During the Tran Dynasty, there was also rice harvesting in the fields of Tich Dien. During the Later Le Dynasty, King Le Thanh Tong also built an altar to worship Shennong in 1484. During the Nguyen Dynasty, the worship of Shennong and the organization of the Tich Dien festival received even more attention and were restored and solemnly carried out. The Nguyen Dynasty attaches great importance to the President's Day ceremony. King Gia Long ascended the throne in 1802, then in 1806 he built the Nam Giao 南郊壇 altar in the south of Hue citadel to make offerings to heaven every 3 years and built the Xa Tac altar near the imperial citadel to make offerings twice a year in September. In many years, February and August are sacrificed three times, corresponding to the rice planting and harvesting schedule. King Minh Menh succeeded to the throne and wanted to build a powerful empire. Everything had to have regular, unified, and proper rituals, so he ordered a review of this sacrificial ritual throughout the country. The book Dai Nam Thuc Luc also records: "Mau Ty, the 9th year of Minh Menh [1828], May,... On Dinh Mao day, the king plowed the fields of Tich Dien. After the ceremony, a banquet was given to the servants at Khanh Ninh palace. For example: "The people consider food as the greatest priority, so the Tich Dien plowing ceremony cannot be abandoned. If the king does not stand up and do it himself, there is no way he can teach people to abandon the top things and focus on the roots. In our country, from the Le dynasty onwards, this ceremony has been occasionally performed, but it is still brief. The Emperor examined Emperor Cao after his martial arts were determined, and hundreds of things were repaired, but one respected agriculture. The Ministry of Rites does not yet know how to be holy but examines the ancient ceremonies, so it is not yet possible to celebrate them. Today, I follow my previous will to compose ceremonial music, all following the times. Humanity for the Ministry of Rites, according to the ancient rites, to imitate and practice. So, at an auspicious time on May 29, I went to Tien Nong's altar. After the ceremony, he went to the Tich Dien field again, took the plow, and plowed three
furrows “夫民以食為天，故耕藉之禮必不可廢…不有以親率之則無以教天下舍末而崇本也。至於我越黎氏以前亦聞有行之但猶率略故未暇舉行。朕克承先志興作禮樂亶惟Home躬秉耒耜舉行三… (Dai Nam Thuc Luc Chinh, 2007, Vol. 2, p. 735 – 742). Before that, King Minh Menh told his officials about the role of the Tich Dien sacrifice and the reason why this ritual must be performed. The book Dai Nam Thuc Luc records: "Mau Ty, the 9th year of Minh Menh (1828)... February,... Beginning to lay Tich Dien fields. The king told his servants: "In ancient times, the king plowed the fields of Tich Dien, to get rice to make sticky rice to offer at Giao Mieu Temple, and also to consider the weather in the fields and advise farmers, which was a big thing in the royal government. The three-lane plowing classic, the books still exist. Our country had that standard in the Tran and Le dynasties, but much of it was simplified. From the time I was in office until now, I have always thought about the people and often made it a priority to teach people to take care of their original profession. Right now the court is idle, talking about finding ancient magic is something that should be done first. Should choose land in the Imperial City as the President’s Field." So he ordered them to be placed in Hau Sinh and An Trach wards. On the left, Quan Canh tower was built, in the front was a rice field for the emperor, in the back was a temple to change clothes, and on the right was a Tien Nong herd and a rice-collecting Than Thuong pavilion. Ordered Trung Quan Tong Phuoc Luong to do it. Bonus for workers and soldiers working 5,000 francs. The Dien Canh (plow practice) station was also located north of Khanh Ninh Palace, called Vinh Trach Garden. The Ministry of Rites discusses the rules/戊子明命九年 ... 二月... 初開藉田。帝謂群臣曰：”古者躬耕帝藉以供郊廟粢盛，且因之省察農我越陳黎閒有舉行儀典率多簡略。朕親政以來屢念民依每以導民務本為急目。今朝廷閒暇，講求古制誠所宜先。可於京城內擇地為躬耕之所，”乃命開設于厚生、安宅二坊，左建觀耕臺，前為帝藉，後為具服，殿右Home宮之北名永澤園令禮部酌議典例 (Dai Nam Thuc Luc Chinh Bien, 2007, p. 701 - 714). In the following years, the 10th, 11th, and 12th Minh Menh (1829-1831), on the auspicious day of the fifth month, the king personally plowed the fields, but it is unclear whether there was a big ceremony like the first year of establishing the rule or not. In the 13th year of Minh Menh (1832), the king
ordered his concubines to urge the palace servants to choose land to grow mulberry trees to raise silkworms and decided to bring the practice of plowing fields and raising silkworms to the district offices. He ordered the Ministry of Rites to consult and draft the city regulations to be introduced for localities to practice, starting from the 14th year of Minh Menh (1833). The tradition includes 3 sections: Plowing the Tich Dien field, Silkworm rearing, and Sacrifices. As for the offerings, there are new features: the Tien Nong altar, offerings using buffalo, pigs, sticky rice, wine, and fruit; There is also an altar to worship Tien Tam, offerings using pigs, sticky rice, wine, and fruit. During the Minh Menh period, the Tich Dien ceremony was performed regularly, and the king still plowed himself, only in a few cases due to unfavorable weather or the king was unwell did he send a prince or Kinh Doan Mandarin to do it instead (like the kings). Minh Menh years 16, 17, 19, 20, 21).

After King Minh Menh, his successors, Thieu Tri, and Tu Duc... still followed this rule. As for the localities, how far they have implemented King Minh Menh's edict if they want to know, a large-scale survey is needed, at least through the document archive of Customs and customs declared by the villages and communes in the Northern region according to the instructions. of the French Institute of the Far East (in Hanoi) in the thirties of the last century. Dr. Nguyen Huu Mui only surveyed an old province of Phuc Yen and found that most villages had the custom of worshiping the God of Nong. The place of worship is sometimes at a communal house. In many places, on the day of Tich Dien, ceremonies are held right at the edge of the field. Only one commune (Manh Tru, Yen Lang district) also has a Tu chi worshiping Tien Nong. According to a survey by Dr. Nguyen Huu Mui, the sacrifice to Shennong in the old Phuc Yen province was carried out on three occasions: Ha Gia (Going to the fields) ceremony held in the 5th lunar month, Thuong Dien (Plowing completed) ceremony held in the fifth lunar month held in July and the Thuong Tan (New Rice Offering) ceremony held in October. Every ceremony has a sacrifice to Shennong, there is a common text, the first sentence is "In front of the Sage of the surname Shennong". The book 宝錄總編 Bao Luc Dong Bien and 皇閣遺文 Hoang doc relics are texts the archives of important documents of the Nguyen court all contain the Shennong ritual orations. The preservation of funeral orations in important State documents contributed to confirming the important position of Shennong in the political life of the feudal State of Vietnam at that time. Clearly, the promotion of Shennong and related ritual activities not only shows the Vietnamese emperor's respect for this deity but
also makes an important contribution to encouraging productive labor and promoting economic development. In the sense of the ancestors of the Vietnamese people, records about Shennong in the feudal period often do not confirm directly but only determine the relationship between Shennong and the characters that legends consider to be the ancestors of the Vietnamese people. The earliest record of Shennong in Vietnam is the ancient book Linh Nam chich quai 領南摭怪, attributed to Tran The Phap 陳世法 of the Tran dynasty, supplemented and completed by Vu Quynh and Kieu Phu in the 15th century. This book collects and records Vietnamese folk tales from ancient times to the Tran Dynasty, mentioning Shennong as a king: "Viem De Shennong". In the Hong Bang Thi Story of this book, it is recorded: "Di Minh, the third-generation grandson of the Yan De family, Shennong gave birth to De Nghi. Later, he patrolled south to Ngu Linh mountain, married the daughter of Mrs. Vu Tien, then returned and gave birth to her daughter, Loc Tuc. Because of his dignified appearance and intelligent nature, Emperor Minh was surprised and allowed him to succeed him on the throne. Loc Tuc tried to refuse and asked to give way to him. Emperor Minh immediately appointed De Nghi as his successor to rule the North, and appointed Loc Tuc as Kinh Duong Vuong to rule the South, taking the country's title of Xich Quy. Kinh Duong Vuong went to visit the water palace, married the daughter of the Dragon King Dong Dinh, and gave birth to Sung Lam. Sung Lam took the title Lac Long Quan and ruled that country in his father's place."

炎帝神農氏三世孫帝明，生帝宜，南巡狩至五嶺，得婺仙之女，納而歸。生 祿續，容貌端正，聰明夙成。帝明奇之，使嗣位。祿續固辭，讓其兄。乃立 宜為嗣，以治 此（北）地。封祿續為涇陽王，以治南方，號為赤鬼國。涇陽 王能行水府（一作入水），娶洞庭君龍王女，生崇纜。號為貉龍君，代治其國（Phap: Linh Nam Chich Quai 陳世法: 《嶺南摭怪列傳》), Hanoi National Library, code R.6, handwritten ancient book, page 4a). This record mentions Shennong as the ancestor of Emperor Minh, a legendary king. Emperor Minh was the ancestor of Lac Long Quan, a figure who according to legend was the father of the Hung Kings, the first kings of Van Lang, the first nation of the Vietnamese people. Thus, according to the transitive nature, although not directly affirmed, Linh Nam Chinh Quai implies that Shennong is the ancestor of the Vietnamese people.
Vietnamese feudal history also has similar records about Shennong. Complete Annals of Dai Viet 大越史記全書 was initiated by Le Van Huu (1230-1322), recording events from the reign of Emperor Trieu Vu to King Ly Chieu Hoang. Next, historians Phan Phu Tien (1370 - 1462), Ngo Si Lien (lived around the 15th century), then Pham Cong Tru (1600 - 1675), Le Hy (1646-1702)... added, corrected, and continued to copy the history from the Tran dynasty to the Le Trung Hung dynasty, especially the Foreign Ky 外紀 section, which Ngo Si Lien reconstructed based on legends. In Ky Hong Bang Thi (Outer Ky) 鴻厖氏紀 (外紀), this book is almost copied from the book Linh Nam Chich Quai: “Nam Tuat in the first year. In the past, Emperor Viem's third-generation grandson, named Shennong, was Di Minh and gave birth to De Nghi. After De Minh patrolled the South, he went to Ngu Linh and married Vu Tien's daughter, giving birth to King [Kinh Duong Vuong]. The king was a wise and intelligent man. Emperor Minh loved him very much and wanted him to succeed him. The king tried to yield to him but did not dare to obey. Emperor Minh recently established De Nghi as his successor, to govern the North, and appointed him Kinh Duong Vuong, to govern the South, calling the country Xich Quy. The king married Dong Dinh Quan's daughter Than Long and gave birth to Lac Long Quan.”壬戌元年。初，炎帝神農氏三世孫帝明，生帝宜。既而南
巡至五領，接得婺僊女，生王。王聖智聰明，帝明奇之，欲使嗣位。王固讓其兄，不敢奉命。帝明於是立帝宜為嗣，治北方，封王為涇陽王，治南方，號赤鬼國。王娶洞庭君女，曰神龍，生貉龍君 (Complete Annals of Dai Viet (大越史記全書), Institute of Sino-Nom Studies Library, code VHv. 179/1-9, volume 1, p.1b).

Information about Lac Long Quan, Kinh Duong Vuong, De Nhi, De Minh, and Shennong... although located in the Foreign Era section (not the official history), is still part of the information recorded by the official history. Therefore, the confirmation of the relationship between Lac Long Quan and Shennong is considered "official" in this official history book.

Figure 2: Page of the Complete History of Dai Viet book 大越史記全書 (Institute of Sino-Nom Studies Library, code VHv. 179/1-9, volume 1, p/1b), the passage records that Kinh Duong Vuong belonged to the Shennong lineage.

Associated with this information, historian Ngo Si Lien commented as follows: "The descendant of Shennong Thi, Emperor Minh, married Vu Tien's daughter and gave birth to Kinh Duong Vuong, that is, the ancestor of Bach Viet" 神農氏之後帝明得婺僊女而生涇陽王，是為百粤始祖 (Complete Annals of Dai Viet (大越史記全書).
Institute of Sino-Nom Studies Library, code VHv. 179/1-9, vol1, p. 2b). Ngo Si Lien in the Preface to Dai Viet Su Ky Toan Thu and Le Tung in Viet Giam's comprehensive review of this book all confirm: "My ancestors are descendants of the Shennong family, so heaven gave birth to the true lord, who together with the Northern Dynasty, could become emperors of each direction" or "Kinh Duong Vuong, surnamed Hong Bang, the successor of the Shennong family" (Complete Annals of Dai Viet, vol I, p. 99).

By the 18th century, the "private family" history of Ngo Thi Si 吳時仕, Viet su tien xa 越史標案, also did not add anything, only stating clearly about this period "civilization is not enough to consider, stories did not pass it down" had no basis for research, so he only "temporarily followed and recounted it, copying it at the beginning of the foreign century" (Si, 1960, p.9), meaning that he also followed Ngo Si Lien's way of recording history, considering Shennong to be related to his ancestors of Vietnamese people. The history compiled by the Nguyen Dynasty is Kham Di 越史通鑑, the part about Hung Vuong and the establishment of the capital in Phong Chau (Kham Dinh Viet Su Thong Cuong Giam, 1998, vol I, p.67) is also recorded in the same way. All of these histories are consistent in the concept: that King Hung (the first king of Van Lang country, also considered the ancestor of the Vietnamese people) was a descendant of Shennong.

In this discourse, the ancients only recognized the descendants of the character Shennong as the ancestors of the Vietnamese people and did not directly recognize Shennong as the ancestors of the Vietnamese people.

4.2 MEANING OF THE SHENNONG SYMBOL IN CURRENT VIETNAMESE CULTURE

Today, Vietnam is a country with the fastest economic development in the world. Since the reform (1991), Vietnam's GDP growth within 20 years (1991 - 2011) reached 7.34%/year, among the highest in Southeast Asia in particular, in Asia, and beyond the world in general. In the period 2016 - 2020, Vietnam's average GDP growth rate was 6.0%/year, higher than the average of developing countries. In the first 9 months of 2022 alone, although the world economy is still heavily affected by the COVID-19 pandemic and has a low growth rate, Vietnam's socio-economy still develops stably, exceeding and reaching 14/15 targets set, GDP growth for the whole year is estimated at 8.0%. The scale of Vietnam's GDP in 2020 increased 1.4 times compared to 2015, reaching about 271.2
billion USD (according to reassessment, reaching about 343.2 billion USD), and average income per capita reached 2,779 USD, double 1.3 times in 2015.

The structure of economic sectors has shifted positively towards industrialization and modernization. The proportion of agriculture, forestry, and fisheries in GDP decreased from 18.9% in 2010 to 14.8% in 2020; The proportion of the industrial, construction, and service sectors (including subsidized product taxes) increased from 81.1% in 2010 to 85.2% in 2020, exceeding the set target. The proportion of labor in industry and construction increased from 21.7% to 30.3%, and the service sector from 29.7% to about 35.7% in the same period. Resolution No. 23-NQ/TW of the Politburo on orientations for building national industrial development policies to 2030, with a vision to 2045, issued on March 22, 2018, has identified general goals. for Vietnam's development: by 2030, Vietnam will complete the goal of industrialization and modernization, basically becoming a modern industrial country; belongs to the group of three leading countries in the ASEAN region in terms of industry, in which some industries are internationally competitive and deeply participate in the global value chain. Vision to 2045, Vietnam will become a modern industrialized country.

Therefore, agriculture no longer plays a unique role like in feudal times. Faced with that situation, the Shennong symbol has also had a change in meaning to carry out new missions in a new era. Accordingly, the meaning associated with agriculture is gradually expanded into the spirit of creative labor in a new era; The meaning associated with the ancestors of the Vietnamese people is gradually emphasized to tighten national solidarity and concentrate national strength to lead the country to develop in the future.

Therefore, the worship of Shennong continues to develop. Phong Nam ancient village (Hoa Chau, Hoa Vang, Da Nang) has a temple worshiping Shennong built about 500 years ago, surviving through bombs and bullets of all periods. Unfortunately, after the war, it no longer existed. But in 1995 the villagers rebuilt it. The research work on Southern communal houses in the past and present, by two researchers Huynh Ngoc Trang and Truong Ngoc Tuong, also shows the rich ways of worshiping Shennong of Southern people. According to this book, Southern people almost only know and worship Shennong but do not know Hau Tac. Places of worship and ways of worship are very diverse: "In the Central region, Shennong is worshiped in a temple in the middle of the field, not required to live near a communal house. In the South, there are also some places to worship Shennong in the main shrine or an open-air temple. From Binh Chanh to Hau
Giang, the key agricultural area, and the altars worshiping the God of Nong are all in a solemn position right in the middle of the communal houseyard. On the contrary, in some places in Tay Ninh and Bien Hoa, farming is secondary, so the Shennong altar is only built in one corner of the yard. The Shennong herd in this area is not as massive as in other places. Southern people also "composed" very simple and innocent legends to justify the custom of outdoor worship of the God of Agriculture. “According to oral tradition, in addition to teaching people how to farm, God also wants to teach people how to build houses. However he only knew how to use leaves to make a flat-roofed house, so it did not meet the requirements, and had to build a two-roofed house according to Ms. Cuu Thien Huyen Nu's instructions. So everyone respected Ms. Cuu Thien as the carpenter's Patriarch. Shennong is ashamed and would rather stay outdoors and never go into a woman's (Trang & Tuong, 1999, p.152). The festival to worship the God of Nong in Tong Lenh (Truong Giang commune, Luc Nam district, Bac Giang province) has a sacrifice floor as high as a person's head, on the north side are stalls, and children below pretend to be frogs waiting for the rain. After the ceremony, the priest sprinkled water on the frogs, and the frogs croaked signaling the return of rain. A man pretends to be a buffalo, a person behind him plays the role of a harrower, and a woman plays the role of a transplanter, walking around the altar... the ritual has the meaning of praying for good rain, good wind, and good harvests. The festival at Tam Dong Vong temple, Luong Phong commune, Hiep Hoa district is held on the 10th day of the 10th lunar month. If the year is dry, hold a ceremony to pray for rain. The Lord Hoi is an elderly person who leads the procession, and the villagers follow behind, the Lord Hoi plays three times on the gong, then announces: "The Lord Hoi Hoi goes to preach/The drought-stricken fields/Please Mr. and Mrs. Tri Nong bowl" water / Full of fields for their children to do business / For favorable weather conditions. The festival of worshipping the God of Agriculture and the procession of the God of Agriculture in the ancient Thuy Thu village (now Loc Tho village, Doc Lap commune, Hung Ha) is also called the water splashing ceremony. In the festival, there is a ritual of holding incense sticks symbolizing the Shennong wading into the fields holding a "bundle of rice seedlings" to plant. Everyone in the festival wades into the fields and competes in splashing water on the Shennong amid the bustling festival drums... (Trang & Tuong, 1999, p.221). Notably, in 2009, the Tich Dien festival was restored by Ha Nam province, with the participation of senior state leaders. In 2010, on the morning of February 20 (January 7), for the first time, President Nguyen Minh Triet...
held a plow to perform the Tich Dien ceremony in Doi Son, Ha Nam province. The reason for restoring the Tich Dien ceremony and worshiping Shennong was clearly stated by President Nguyen Minh Triet: "Today, even though we are industrializing and modernizing the country, we cannot underestimate the agricultural and rural battles. Tich Dien Festival is an opportunity to remind people to take care of rural agricultural development to stabilize their lives and build new rural areas." According to the Resolution of the Seventh Conference of the Central Executive Committee, term X on agriculture, farmers and rural areas (No. 26-NQ/TW) dated August 5, 2008, "new rural areas" are understood as "having modern socio-economic infrastructure; economic structure and reasonable forms of production organization, linking agriculture with the rapid development of industry, services and urban areas according to planning; Stable rural society, rich in national cultural identity; People's knowledge is improved, the ecological environment is protected; The political system in rural areas under the Party's leadership has been strengthened" (Phuong, 2023).

Thus, the fact that Vietnamese state leaders restored the Tich Dien pear and directly participated in the festival in the context of the country's strong industrialization and modernization has great symbolic value. Accordingly, the symbolic meaning of
Shennong associated with agriculture still leaves traces in this cultural activity, and at the same time extends to the meaning of the spirit of labor to build a new life in a new era. After President Nguyen Minh Triet, there were more senior leaders of the State of Vietnam attending this ceremony. For example, on February 11, 2019 (7 days of January), Deputy Prime Minister Truong Hoa Binh also attended the ceremony and performed the ritual of going down to the fields at the Tich Dien festival in Doi Son.

Most recently, Doi Son Tich Dien Festival 2023 takes place for 3 days, from January 26 to 28, 2023 (ie January 5 - 7, Quy Mao year). After the ceremony of worshiping the God of Nong, and praying for a new year with good weather and good harvests, there is an opening drum performance performed by the female drum team of Doi Tam village combined with a dragon dance. The ceremony recreated the scene of King Le Dai Hanh going down to the fields to be plowed by highly virtuous elders in Doi Son village, followed by village women sowing seeds. According to the leaders of Ha Nam province, "Doi Son Tich Dien Festival is a National Intangible Cultural Heritage, held annually and has become a beauty in community cultural activities... Tich Dien Festival is a cultural and spiritual tourism activity that contributes to promoting the image of Ha Nam people in innovation, development, and integration and creating richness for the traditional festivals of the Vietnamese people. Implementing the Party's 5th Central Resolution, Session VIII on "Building and Developing an Advanced Vietnamese Culture Rich in National Identity"; Implementing the direction of the Provincial Party Committee, People's Council, and People's Committee of Ha Nam province, in 2009, Doi Son Tich Dien Festival was restored. From then until now, after 15 years of organization, the core cultural values of the Tich Dien Festival are still enduring and living forever; The countryside has been renovated, the material and spiritual lives of the people have been significantly improved, social security is guaranteed, political security, social order and safety are maintained.

The Vietnamese ancestral meaning of the Shennong symbol was first expressed directly through the newly formed custom of worshiping Shennong in Bac Giang province. Bac Giang province has just restored the festival and rebuilt a temple worshiping the God of Nong in Cam Ly commune, Luc Nam district. The new temple was built in 2019 for people from all over the world to come and pray for a year of good weather and prosperous agricultural production. The decoration in the middle of the temple is the altar and the statue of King Shennong. Next to the Shennong statue is a
throne worshiping 18 Hung Kings (legendary kings, considered the ancestors of the Vietnamese people). The statue of Shennong is placed in the middle, the most solemn place of the temple, confirming the most important status of this ancestor among all the figures worshiped here.

Figure 4: Statue of Shennong on the altar in Cam Ly commune, Luc Nam district, Bac Giang province

Shennong was thus not officially acknowledged as the progenitor of the Vietnamese people throughout the feudal era but was only given that title. The meaning of the Vietnamese ancestor of the Shennong symbol was first reflected in the look of the temple and the arrangement of the altar area at the Shennong temple in Cam Ly commune, Luc Nam district, Bac Giang province directly stated. This new interpretation of an ancient symbol demonstrates the Scorpio symbol's evolving meaning.

In the treasure trove of legends still passed down to this day, Vietnamese people always remember their two ancestors, Lac Long Quan and Au Co, and their children: the Hung Kings. These stories help create a bond between ethnic groups, and at the same time create trust and agreement between ethnic groups about living areas as well as other conventions, creating harmony and harmony stability in the living process of the ethnic community. The new discourse promises that the Shennong symbol will gradually become one of many such symbols, passed down by generations of Vietnamese people,
adding glue to a multi-ethnic country like Vietnam (Vietnamese law recognizes that Vietnam has 54 ethnic groups (according to the List of Vietnamese ethnic groups based on Decision No. 421, March 2, 1979, of the General Director of the General Statistics Office of Vietnam)

5 CONCLUSION

The meaning of the Shennong symbol in Vietnam can be identified through bibliographies (especially ancient bibliographies) and cultural activities (especially religious activities). When comparing the meaning of the Shennong symbol in the past (feudal period) with the present time, we can see that the new discourse of this symbol has changed the direction of adapting to the new tasks and new services of the new era.

The character Shennong, right from the name, is closely associated with an important material production activity of the Vietnamese people: farming. During the feudal period, this was a vital career field in Vietnam, so it was highly respected by the people and the ruling class. In the modern era, although it no longer holds the unique position as before, agriculture still contributes significantly to stabilizing people's lives, improving the economy, and making an important contribution to the cause of industrialization, modernizing Vietnam.

Along with this meaning, the myth of Shennong is also a myth associated with the ancestors of the Vietnamese people, associated with the origin of the Vietnamese people, and can gather individuals in the same community with a common belief in memory history, about ancestors.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

This research is funded by Vietnam National Foundation for Science and Technology Development (NAFOSTED) under grant number 602.09-2019.03
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