

DOCTORAL THESIS COMPENDIUM

Author's name: HOANG THI KIM OANH

Thesis title: *Novels on Vietnamese countryside in the early 21st century*

Scientific branch of the thesis: Literature

Major: Vietnam Literature

Code: 92 22 01 21

The name of postgraduate training institution: Faculty of Social Sciences, Hong Duc University

1. Goals and subject of the doctoral thesis

Goals of the doctoral thesis: The research aims to identify and explain the outstanding features of the content and writing style of novels on rural topics in the early 21st century, thereby pointing out the contributions of rural novels of this period in the movement of national literature as well as the limits to be overcome in order for the literature to have more great works on rural topics in the future.

Subject of the doctoral thesis: The research subjects of the thesis are novels written on Vietnamese countryside that were published in the early 21st century.

Scope of the doctoral thesis:

Scope of content: Study the characteristics of content and writing style of novels on Vietnamese countryside published in the early 21st century.

Scope of material: Novels written on Vietnamese rural topics were published in the first 20 years of the 21st century, in which the thesis selects works that have had certain success and have drawn a lot of interest from readers, scholars, and critics such as the works written by To Hoai, Vo Van Truc, Nguyen Huu Nhan, Tran Quoc Tien, Trinh Thanh Phong, Duong Huong, Nguyen Phan Hach, Ta Duy Anh, Dao Thang, Hoang Minh Tuong, Do Minh Tuan, Bui Thanh Minh, Nguyen The Hung, Duong Duy Ngu, Thu Loan, Do Tien Thuy, Do Bich Thuy... In particular, the thesis pays more attention to novels written about the countryside in the North. A number of novels written about the southern countryside or mountainous life are mentioned when the thesis analyzes the urban-rural spatial change under the impact of rural urbanization. In order to clarify the contribution of rural novels in the early 21st century, the author further increases the area of comparative research with novels on the same theme at different phases in the previous periods as appropriate.

2. Research methods

The main approach of the thesis is to study genre theory. Each literary genre has its own poetics expression, expressing a certain realistic content. In order to identify and explain the outstanding features of the content and writing style of rural novels in the early 21st century, thereby highlighting the contributions of these novels in the national literary process, the thesis makes use of the following research methods:

- ***Approach from novel genre theory:*** Basic arguments in the theory of novel genres of M.Bakhtin are used as a tool to analyze and explain the problems posed by the thesis.

- ***Interdisciplinary research methods:*** the research methods of cultology, sociology, ecology are combined to create a basis for identifying and explaining the characteristics of the content and writing style of rural novels in the early 21st century.

- ***Systematic method:*** The thesis examines research subjects in the process of formation, movement and development of rural novels from the beginning of the 20th century to the present in order to determine the position and meaning of the novel about the Vietnamese countryside in the early 21st century in the process of modern literature.

- ***Comparative method:*** The chronological comparative method is applied to clarify the inheritance and creative contributions of rural novels in the early 21st century compared with those novels in previous periods. Synchronous comparison between this character and other characters, between this work and other works to identify and further explain the issues raised in the thesis.

- ***Literary work analysis method:*** analyzing the characteristics of the content and writing style of the works; accordingly, the thesis synthesizes and generalizes into the general characteristics of the content and writing style of the novel on contemporary Vietnamese countryside.

3. Main results and conclusion

3.1. Main results

In addition to a list of references and appendices, the thesis is divided into three parts: introduction, content and conclusion. The thesis content consists of four chapters:

Chapter 1. Overview of research problems

Chapter 2. New perspectives, new issues in novels on rural topics in the early 21st century

Chapter 3. The character of the "familiar but strange" farmer in the novel on rural topics in the early 21st century

Chapter 4. Inheritance and efforts to renew writing style in novels on rural topics in the early 21st century

The thesis has achieved the following results:

- Systematize a list of typical rural novels from the beginning of the 21st century to the present to use as research resources for relevant topics.

- Evaluate the overview of the movement of rural novels, the situation of researching rural novels in Vietnamese literature, factors affecting the development of rural novels in the early 21st century.

- Analyze and interpret rural reality through novels about Vietnamese countryside in the early 21st century from new perspectives (historical, cultural, ecological...).

- Analyze and interpret the image of farmers through novels about Vietnamese countryside in the early 21st century from new perspectives (on the aspects of social anthropology, culture, ecology...).

- Point out the characteristics of writing style of novels about Vietnamese countryside in the early 21st century.

In general, the thesis is a comprehensive and in-depth study of rural novels in the early 21st century. From the perspective of genre, the thesis has pointed out the movement, characteristics of content and writing style of these novels to help readers visualize the appearance and contributions of the genre for contemporary Vietnamese literature.

3.2. Conclusion

- Rural novels from the 20th century to the beginning of the 21st century have undergone significant changes from the realistic approach, the concept of people to the mode of expression... In each period, rural novels always have inheritance and innovation in both content and artistic form. On that basis, the thesis assesses both subjective and objective causes which are opportunities and challenges as well for the development of rural novels in the early 21st century.

- Up to now, although there have been many articles and theses... taking rural novels as research objects. However, the period from the beginning of the 21st century up to now has not been focused on discussing as an independent period representing the turn of the century of rural novels. The thesis has conducted a review, commented on novel research works on rural topics in Vietnamese literature in the 20th century and the early years of the 21st century, thereby suggesting a multi-dimensional view

such as culturology, ecology, social anthropology... for a more comprehensive and complete study, and pointing out achievements as well as limitations in terms of content and writing style of rural novel in a period in a new century.

- Rural novels in the early 21st century has continued the movement of prose since the renovation until now. First of all, their range of rural reality is enlarged. That reality is not only historical events but also the reality of everyday rural life with multi-relationships. Rural novels in the early 21st century also aim at a more complete and profound conception of man. At the beginning of the renovation period, the people in literature changed strongly from the community person to the individual person while in this period, literature has oriented towards the ontological person. One of the ontological aspects of man that writers are interested in discovering and manifesting is the natural man, the sexual man. In terms of spiritual life, the unconscious is also revealed, bringing more insight into the human being in its complexity and mystery. These efforts have given rural novels in the early 21st century a new vitality, a new look.

- Rural novels in the early 21st century present new perspectives and new issues on rural life in terms of culture, ecology and sociology. In these novels, rural society is full of uncertainty and insecurity with many ecological warnings from natural ecology, social ecology to spiritual ecology: the destruction of the natural ecological environment and landscape structure; the change in function and structure in the family; the invasion of urban culture into rural culture breaking many traditional values of the village for thousands of years. In addition, it is not only the story of the buffalo and the plow, the relationships among the families, the clans, the villages... but also the story of love, sex, and the relationship between man and nature and himself, the struggle between the old and the new... The rural painting is thereby so colorful and full of sounds, which makes the readers experience different levels of emotions, including happiness and sadness, happiness and suffering, and even sorrows and worries. Rural novels in the early 21st century have allowed readers to enjoy attractive "spiritual food" thanks to the ingenious "variations" of writers.

- The portrait of a farmer, sketched in rural novels in the early 21st century with industrious, blue-collar, and gentle features, has become an archetype once carved into literature; in addition, there are both bright and dark, good and bad, high and low... sides, which are familiar but strange, even surprising. In addition to analyzing

the enduring qualities and inherent identities, the thesis has pointed out changes in mentality, torn by conflicts, and hidden desires in each farmer. To be more realistic, they were genuinely recognized as complex individuals with good and bad, good and evil, and high and low qualities. This is typical differences between rural novels in the early 21st century and those in previous periods.

- The aspects of content and artistic form of rural novels written in the early 21st century cannot be separated because the form contains the content and vice versa. Accordingly, the thesis focuses on the characteristics of writing style and then analyzes some movements of rural novels in this period as an extension of the conventional writing style. The linear plot structure, the Development of character lines, and the third-person narrator all indicate the writers' creative inheritance of the conventional writing style. The thesis also points out the efforts to renew and renovate the writing style of rural novels in the early 21st century in the general process of contemporary literature thanks to the acquisition and application of postmodern genre theories. Specifically, the fragmented, assembled, and open textures are used by a number of writers. The language of rural novels is also diversified with colloquial language, satiric language or sexual body language. In particular, the enhancement of dialogues has created multi-voice for rural novels in this period. It is not only a dialogue between characters, between characters and writers, but also the dialogue among characters, writers and readers during their debates and interpretations of the reality. These efforts prove that rural novels published in the early 21st century have caught up with the development trend of contemporary prose, affirming its position in the general flow of national literature.

- Despite their astonishing popularity, early 21st-century rural books nevertheless have certain limitations. Most of the works of this period have not really had a breakthrough. Readers still have a sense of "not enough" when addressing contemporary hot topics since the author's pen has not reached the conclusion of the narrative. The growth of the novel genre in particular and contemporary national literature in general has, however, been greatly aided by the rural novels written in the early 21st century, each with its distinct voice and approach. For rural novels in the new period, these are merely the first steps on a difficult and protracted path because literature is a never-ending pursuit. The author hopes that the thesis will give readers a more thorough understanding of rural novels in the early 21st century as a result of the

research findings. In addition, despite the author's best efforts, all issues have not been able to cover thoroughly. Future research will focus on the problems of researching rural novels from the perspective of ecology, sociology, especially when adapting literary works for the big screen..., which provide intriguing ideas and a variety of visuals for rural novels.

SUPERVISORS

PhD STUDENT

Assoc. Prof. PhD. Le Tu Anh

PhD. Le Thanh Tam

Hoang Thi Kim Oanh