

Abstract:

This paper aims to compare ethnocentric motifs from the three myths of different cultures. These are: 1) The Aeneid of the Romans, 2) A story of migration from Aztlan of the Mexica, and 3) Hexateuchal tale of the Jewish exodus. Ethnocentric motifs are organized into four categories named by myself: 1) Divine presence and leadership, 2) Election of the people and promise of superiority, 3) Promise of the land, and 4) The fall of the unworthy. All myths are treated in their own historico-cultural context and ethnocentric motifs are judged according to the notion of ethnicity in their respective myths.

As a result of my comparison I present a theory that those motifs are similar on the surface because of their great and universal potential to shape ethnic identity. Yet more importantly I emphasize their differences, which appear during a careful and contextual analysis. These differences correspond, in my opinion, well with the conception of ethnicity and one's own superiority of every ethnic group discussed.

Key words: Aeneid, Aztlan, exodus, ethnicity, ethnocentrism, comparison of myths.