

**A Comparative Study of Gender Roles in Modern Mythologies with  
Special Reference to *Karna's Wife* and *The Penelopiad***

**By**

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**(21PEN029)**

**A Thesis Submitted to**

**Avinashilingam Institute for Home Science and Higher Education for Women,**

**Coimbatore-641043**

**in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the**

**Master's Degree in English**

**May 2023**

**DECLARATION**

## DECLARATION

I do hereby declare that the dissertation entitled **A Comparative Study of Gender Roles in Modern Mythologies with Special Reference to *Karna's Wife* and *The Penelopiad*** submitted to Avinashilingam Institute for Home Science and Higher Education for Women (SF), Coimbatore, in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the award of the degree of **Master of Arts (M.A.)** is a dissertation carried out by me **SANTHIYA K.** during the period from JANUARY 2023 – MAY 2023 under the guidance of **Dr. Ananthi Ballamurugan**, Assistant Professor, Department of English, Avinashilingam Institute for Home Science and Higher Education for Women (SF), Coimbatore, and, has not formed the basis for the award of any Degree, Diploma, Associateship, Fellowship or similar Titles in this University or any other University or other similar Institutions of Higher Learning.

**Signature of the Candidate**

**CERTIFICATE**

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This is to certify that the dissertation entitled **A Comparative Study of Gender Roles in Modern Mythologies with Special Reference to *Karna's Wife* and *The Penelopiad*** submitted to Avinashilingam Institute for Home Science and Higher Education for Women (SF), Coimbatore, in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the award of the degree of **Master of Arts (M.A.)** is a dissertation carried out by **SANTHIYA K.** during the period of her study from **JANUARY 2023 – MAY 2023** in Avinashilingam Institute for Home Science and Higher Education for Women (SF), Coimbatore, under the guidance of **Dr. Ananthi Ballamurugan** Assistant Professor, Department of English, Avinashilingam Institute for Home Science and Higher Education for Women (SF), Coimbatore, and, has not formed the basis for the award of any Degree, Diploma, Associateship, Fellowship or similar Titles in this University or any other University or other similar Institutions of Higher Learning.

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## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENT**

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The researcher thanks the lord almighty for the abundant blessings showered on her during the study period.

The researcher expresses her gratitude to Prof. S.P. Thyagarajan, revered chancellor, of Avinashilingam Institute for Home Science and Higher Education for Women, for all the good wishes towards the successful completion of the study.

The researcher expresses her gratitude to Dr.V, Bharathi Harishankar revered Vice-Chancellor of Avinashilingam Institute for Home Science and Higher Education for Women for all her good wishes towards the successful completion of the study.

The researcher would like to thank, Dr. S. Kowsalya, Registrar, Avinashilingam Institute for Home Science and Higher Education for Women, for extending full support for the successful completion of the study.

The researcher would like to express her gratitude to Dr. K.T. Geetha, Dean, Faculty of Humanities, Avinashilingam Institute for Home Science and Higher Education for Women, for her encouragement throughout the study.

The researcher would like to express her gratitude to Dr. S. Raja, Director, Avinashilingam Institute for Home Science and Higher Education for Women (SF), Coimbatore, for his constant support for the completion of the study.

The researcher would like to express her gratitude to Dr. S. Devashanthi, Assistant Professor and Head in charge, Department of English, Avinashilingam Institute for Home Science and Higher Education for Women, Coimbatore, for her help in the conduct of the study.

The researcher feels highly elated in expressing her glowing sense of gratitude to her guide Dr. Ananthi Ballamurugan Department of English, Avinashilingam Institute for Home Science and Higher Education for Women, for her meticulous guidance, deep concern, constructive suggestions, continued motivation, and sincere help and for her constant support to complete the study.

The researcher takes this opportunity to extend her thanks to all the staff members of, the Department of English for their support.

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## ABSTRACT

This study intends to make a comparative study of the gender roles in *Karna's Wife*, and *The Penelopiad* through rewritten mythical works. The gender biases and stereotypical elements have been wiped off in the rewritten works, and also the unwanted boundaries imposed by society on an individual have been broken in order to explore their life to the fullest possible with their potential. The classical concepts of the ancient mythologies have been reconstructed in these modern mythologies of the twenty-first century, which enforces the need for ideological changes befitting the present time, and whose demands, requirements, and value systems are completely different from the time period of the classical mythologies.

The first chapter, **Introduction** discusses culture as well as mythology since mythology is the product of culture. Mythology upholds the values and ideologies of the culture to which it belongs. Embodiment of cultural values become the characters in the mythology and they are revered as icons whom the culture looks upon as a benchmark for those qualities and the evolution of the cultural group. Since the selected work consists of mythological work from Eastern and Western cultures both the mythologies are briefly overviewed. And their characters are analyzed for their significance.

The second chapter **The Mythical Characters in Greek and Indian Mythology** elaborates on mythical characters symbolic of virtues and vice; and the counterparts of these gods and goddesses in the traditional Greek and Indian mythology. These myths have been explained through the context of ancient myths which uphold the gender roles in terms of culture and beliefs and also how they influence both society and individuals.

Chapter three, **Breaking Boundaries**, discusses the changing gender roles that have been brought up through the rewritten works of *The Penelopiad* and *Karna's Wife*. The characters of these rewritten mythologies Karna and Odysseus, Eurycleia and Kunti, Helen of Troy and Draupadi, Menelaus and Arujna, and others have been shaped well to correspond with the modern world. Changes in times, the transformation of civilization, and changes in man's perceptions have greatly influenced gender roles. To meet the situations and demands of modern life gender roles are reconstructed. Uruvi, Penelope, and other characters are reconstructed to achieve their goals irrespective of their gender constraints.

In **Conclusion**, this study argues that the rewritten works are modern mythologies that prescribe new gender roles for men and women based on modern perceptions that disapprove of gender inequality. These reconstructed mythological icons are models for the twenty-first-century generation and society can look upon them as cultural role models and symbols. It is believed that the rewritten works explore the unique perspective of gender roles and give a new form of hope and belief.

## Chapter I

### Introduction

"God made man because he liked to hear a story." (Wiesel, 181) Myths are stories that are based on tradition. Mythology is a reflection of culture and customs. Some may have factual origins, while others are completely fictional. But myths are more than mere stories and they serve a more profound purpose in ancient and modern cultures. It's sacred tales that explain the world and man's experience. That relevant to us today as they were to the ancients. Myths answer timeless questions and serve as a compass to each generation.

The myths of a golden age give people hope that there are great leaders who will improve their lives. The subject of myths reflects the universal concerns of mankind throughout history: birth, death, and the afterlife, the origin of man and the world, good and evil, and the nature of man himself. A myth taps into a universal cultural narrative, the collective wisdom of man. Folklore can be seen as a reflection of the human psyche and the collective human experience.

It embodies the universal human tendency to seek meaning, purpose, and understanding in the world around us. Myths often express deep-seated human emotions, desires, fears, and struggles in symbolic and allegorical ways, allowing societies to grapple with existential questions and make sense of the complexities of life.

The Story of Demeter and Persephone is associated with the value of Motherly Love and Nurturing Demeter, the goddess of agriculture and fertility, had a daughter named Persephone who was abducted by Hades and taken to the Underworld. Demeter's grief caused the crops on Earth to wither, and she refused to allow anything to grow until

her daughter was returned. This story portrays the deep love and nurturing bond between a mother and her child, highlighting the value of motherly love and protection.

The Story of Durga is Associated with the values of Courage, Strength, and Protection Durga is a powerful goddess in Hindu mythology, known as the divine mother and the embodiment of feminine energy. The story of Durga narrates her battle against the demon Mahishasura, who was causing havoc on Earth. Durga's story symbolizes courage, strength, and protection, and she is often worshiped for her fierce and protective nature.

Both Durga and Demeter have similarities in their motherly characteristics. As a goddess, they both have significant concerns about humankind as mothers do towards their children. They show their rough side too straight up the life path of their loved people, the emphasis is given to their productive and strict nature. However, the lovable side or the lovable characteristic has not been discussed or known by humankind. These impeccable two personalities in this story have these similar characteristics, and they resemble feminine strength and motherly love.

The Story of Heracles is associated with the value of Strength and Heroism Heracles, also known as Hercules, was a demi-god known for his immense strength and courage. He performed twelve labors as punishment for his past misdeeds and demonstrated exceptional heroism and bravery in overcoming numerous challenges. Heracles' story portrays the value of physical and mental strength, determination, and heroism.

The Story of Lord Hanuman is Associated with the values of Devotion, Loyalty, and Strength Lord Hanuman is a revered deity in Hindu mythology, known for his

unwavering devotion and loyalty to Lord Rama. He is depicted as a monkey god with great strength, agility, and wisdom. Hanuman's story narrates his brave and selfless acts in assisting Lord Rama in his quest to rescue his wife Sita from the demon king Ravana. Hanuman's story exemplifies the values of devotion, loyalty, and selflessness.

Heracles and Hanuman hold high values in their lives, Heracles overcomes many challenges and even looks for ways to overcome the misdeeds, of his past life. Likewise, Hanuman is a man of principle and power. Both of these personalities hold, similar values, such as strongness, and both mental and physical stability these personalities are from different parts of the world but lived by a similar principle in both of their lives.

Culture is the manifestation of the combined thought process, ideas, customs, rituals, and social conduct of a particular community of people. The knowledge, attitude, belief, goals, morals, and values shared by society is considered a culture altogether. Culture alludes to society and its lifestyle. It is characterized as a bunch of values and convictions, or a group of learned ways of behaving that we share with others in a specific culture, providing us with a feeling of belongingness and personality. Johan Huizinga says “If we are to preserve culture we must continue to create it” (Huizinga, 87).

In particular, there are three fundamental parts of culture, an individual's thought processes, what they do, and the material items they produce. Culture is society's focal point; without culture, no general public might exist. It is a legacy starting with one age and then onto the next age. They provide the right guidance to the people, resulting in positive performances and behavior. They affect people's attitudes towards life and how they allocate resources and improve their life skills. Cultural values can often be a way of

developing a spiritual practice. You might feel more tuned in when you are putting these values into practice. They could also help you find meaning in a difficult situation.

Values are individual convictions that spike people to act in some way or another. They go about as a helper for the human approach to acting. Overall, people lean toward embracing the characteristics they are raised with. People similarly will for the most part believe that those values are "right" since they are the potential gains of their particular culture. Consequently, whether values are heavenly, have innate worth, or are a means to an end, values shift among individuals and across social orders and time. Values are ordinary experiences in cordial movement containing both individual and social responses and mindsets.

It expects a basic part in fables, which implies the collection of stories, convictions, and legends that are a significant part of the time slipped by down through ages and give explanations to the start of the world, human existence, and typical eccentricities. Legends reflect the social and social potential gains of a particular get-together or civilization, and values are much of the time portrayed through the characters, events, and points in the whimsical stories.

Harishchandra is known for his unwavering commitment to truth and righteousness, despite extreme hardships and challenges. He is considered a symbol of selflessness, sacrifice, and moral uprightness. Apollo, on the other hand, is known for his multifaceted nature. Usually, he is a calm, wise, and knowledgeable god, and is often depicted as a handsome and youthful deity.

Harishchandra is revered in Hindu mythology as a legendary figure who exemplifies virtues such as truthfulness, integrity, and selflessness. His story is often

cited as an example of the importance of upholding truth and righteousness, even in the face of adversity. Apollo, in Greek mythology, is considered one of the Twelve Olympian gods and holds a significant place in Greek art, literature, and philosophy. He is often seen as a representation of artistic inspiration, healing, and divine wisdom. While both Harishchandra and Apollo are revered figures from mythology, they belong to different cultural contexts, have distinct attributes, and are associated with different domains of influence.

Gandhari is often depicted as a character with high integrity and nobility. She maintained her dignity and never compromised her values. Her unwavering commitment to righteousness and nobility is often admired. Gandhari and Athena are two notable female characters from mythology, representing different cultures and possessing distinct characteristics.

They both are known for their protective nature toward those they care about. Athena is often depicted as a protector of heroes and the city of Athens, as well as a guardian of civilization and order. She is also known for her just and fair nature and as a protector of women. Gandhari, on the other hand, is often depicted as a devoted wife and mother who fiercely protects her family. She is known for her unwavering love and dedication towards her husband, Dhritarashtra, and her sons, the Kauravas, in the Hindu epic *Mahabharata*.

Athena is often associated with strategic warfare, wisdom in battle, and diplomacy. She is known for her tactical acumen and strategic planning and is often portrayed as a wise counselor and advisor to the gods and mortal heroes. Gandhari, too, is

depicted as a skilled diplomat and advisor, providing counsel and guidance to her husband and sons, particularly in times of conflict and crisis in *The Mahabharata*.

Athena and Gandhari belong to different mythological traditions and cultures, they share certain characteristics such as wisdom, courage, protective nature, strategic skills, and cultural significance. However, it's important to note that they also have distinct differences due to their unique mythological contexts and stories these are some valuable characters. Gender roles refer to the societal expectations and norms that dictate how individuals should behave, think, and express themselves based on their gender. These roles are often shaped by cultural, social, and historical factors and can vary across different societies and periods.

Gender roles are important in society as they influence how individuals perceive and understand gender, and they often dictate how people are expected to behave based on their gender identity. “If women are expected to do the same work as men, we must teach them the same things.”— (Plato, *The Republic*, 106)

The development of gender roles has evolved from ancient to modern societies, shaped by various factors such as culture, religion, economics, politics, and social norms. Here is a general overview of how gender roles have evolved. In Ancient Societies, gender roles were often based on biological differences and were deeply entrenched in religious, cultural, and societal norms. Patriarchal systems where men held power and authority were prevalent in many ancient societies, and women often had limited roles and rights.

In modern societies, gender roles continue to evolve, with ongoing efforts to challenge and redefine traditional norms, promote gender equality, and recognize and

respect diverse gender identities and expressions. However, over time, as societal norms and patriarchal structures evolved, gender roles in Indian mythology became more influenced by traditional societal expectations. Women were often depicted as wives, mothers, and caretakers, and their roles were often associated with domestic duties and family responsibilities.

“Like the generations of leaves, the lives of mortal men. Now the wind scatters the old leaves across the earth, now the living timber bursts with the new buds and spring comes round again. And so with men: as one generation comes to life, another dies away.” (Homer, *The Iliad*, 97).

In recent years, there has been a growing awareness and efforts to challenge and redefine traditional gender roles in Indian mythology. Ancient mythological works have been rewritten because they offer a fresh viewpoint and transform conventional civilization into a free society. I believe that rewritten works are vital for modern culture since this view of mythology allows individuals to think freely and has the potential to help them build their moral principles.

There has been a push for inclusivity, gender equality, and recognition of the diversity of gender identities and expressions in both Greece and Indian society. There are ongoing discussions and debates about the portrayal of gender roles in Indian mythology, with efforts to reinterpret and highlight the empowering aspects of female characters and challenge gender stereotypes.

As we know Sita is considered a warrior in Indian mythology her life is based on chastity and responsibility she did not even think about her feelings and thoughts. As we

see in old Indian folklore, Sita is portrayed as an ethical and romanticized character, known for her virtue, dependability, and commitment as the spouse of Master Rama.

“Be the best you can be, in the worst of circumstances, even when no one is watching” (Pattanaik, *An illustrated Retelling of the Ramayana*, 193) She is in many cases seen as the epitome of gentility, worshipped for her effortless, magnificence, and penance. But In modern times, Sita's portrayal in Indian mythology has been subject to reinterpretation and debate, reflecting changing societal norms and perspectives on gender roles. There are varying interpretations of Sita's character, with some viewing her as a symbol of empowerment and strength, while others see her as a victim of gender discrimination and oppression.

In the modern age, she is portrayed as a multifaceted character who displays courage, intelligence, and independence, and who challenges social norms and expectations. Sita's character has also been reinterpreted to highlight her role as a symbol of feminine empowerment, breaking free from traditional gender roles. She is portrayed as a leader, a warrior, and a role model for women's empowerment, with emphasis on her inner strength and determination. We can see the evolution of rewritten work from the character of Sita.

In Greek mythology Hermes, the Greek god of messages, travel, and commerce, has been portrayed in various ways in ancient and Modern Greek mythology, reflecting changes in societal norms and cultural contexts over time. He was often portrayed as a messenger of the gods, a mediator between the divine and mortal realms, and the guide of souls to the afterlife. Ancient Greek society was patriarchal, and gender roles were typically based on traditional norms where men held power and authority. In modern

times, Hermes has been reinterpreted in various ways, reflecting changing social norms and contemporary perspectives on gender roles. There has been a growing awareness and acceptance of gender diversity, and modern interpretations of Hermes sometimes challenge the traditional gender binary. There has been an increased emphasis on the multidimensionality of Hermes character beyond traditional gender roles.

In ancient Indian mythology, Ravana is typically depicted as a male demon king. He is considered the primary antagonist in the Hindu epic, *The Ramayana*. Ravana's often depicted as a symbol of unchecked masculine power, displaying aggression, lust, and arrogance. In modern times, there have been reinterpretations of Ravana's character in Indian mythology that challenge traditional gender norms and offer alternative perspectives. Ravana is sometimes portrayed as a complex character with nuanced motivations and emotions, rather than being purely evil or malevolent.

Some modern interpretations highlight the role of gender dynamics in Ravana's actions, such as his motivation to possess Sita being driven by societal expectations of masculinity, rather than purely evil intentions. Such interpretations provide a critical lens to examine gender roles and power dynamics in ancient mythology but in modern myth authors explore his multifaceted personality and question societal norms and power dynamics in Indian mythology.

In ancient Greek mythology, Typhon was often portrayed as a fearsome and powerful adversary of the gods, who sought to overthrow the Olympian order and disrupt the cosmic balance. He was depicted as a force of chaos and destruction, challenging the established order of the gods and representing the untamed forces of nature he was typically portrayed as a male monster. In modern myth he was portrayed traditionally

been gender-neutral, focusing on his monstrous nature and his defiance against the gods, rather than his gender role. Now he is considered a symbolic representation of forces of nature or concepts, rather than human beings with gender identities or roles.

Valmiki was a sage, poet, and author in ancient India, known for his contributions to Hindu literature. He is revered as the author of the epic poem *The Ramayana*, which is one of the most significant texts in Hinduism. Ramayana is a revered scripture that consists of Twenty-four thousand verses divided into seven books, and it is considered one of the two great Indian epics, the other being *The Mahabharata*.

Valmiki's works focus on Dharma as a central concept in Hindu philosophy, and his works emphasize the importance of living a righteous and virtuous life by one's dharma, or duty. And it indicates universal human values that transcend cultural, social, and religious boundaries. His dharma, virtues, spiritual and philosophical teachings, and universal human values, and offer insights and guidance that can be useful and relevant to modern society.

Vyasa, also known as Krishna Dvaipayana Vyasa, is a prominent figure in Indian mythology and is considered one of the most important and prolific sages or rishis. He is believed to be the author or compiler of several sacred texts in Hinduism. He is traditionally considered the author of *The Mahabharata*, which is one of the longest epic poems in the world and one of the most important texts in Hindu mythology. And *The Bhagavad Gita*, a sacred scripture within *The Mahabharata*, is considered one of the most important philosophical texts in Hinduism. He is considered the compiler of the Puranas, which are a collection of eighteen ancient Hindu texts that contain myths, legends, and stories about various gods, goddesses, and heroes

Vyasa is a central figure in Hindu mythology and is often portrayed as a wise sage and a seer with deep spiritual knowledge. His works, including *The Mahabharata*, the Vedas, and the Puranas, have had a significant influence on Indian culture, religion, and philosophy, and continue to be studied, revered, and interpreted by scholars, practitioners, and devotees of Hinduism.

Anand Neelakantan is an Indian author known for his work in the fantasy and historical fiction genres. He was born on (December 5, 1973), in Kerala, India. Anand Neelakantan is considered a pioneer of Indian mythological retellings from the antagonist's perspective, providing alternate viewpoints and narratives to well-known Indian epics and legends. He is best known for his debut novel *Asura: Tale of the Vanquished*, which was published in 2012. The book presents the story of the Indian epic *Ramayana* from the perspective of Ravana, the traditional antagonist. The novel was critically acclaimed and gained a wide readership in India.

Since then, Anand Neelakantan has written several other books, including *The Ajaya* series, which is a retelling of the Indian epic *Mahabharata* from the perspective of Duryodhana, and *The Rise of Sivagami*, a prequel to the blockbuster Indian movie *Baahubali*. He writes mythology because he has a keen interest in Indian epics, legends, and mythology, and he is passionate about exploring the stories and characters from these ancient texts. His perspective acknowledges that characters in mythological stories, often considered villains, may have their motivations, struggles, and perspectives. He aims to shed light on the grey areas of morality and challenge simplistic notions of right and wrong.

Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni is an Indian-American author, poet, and professor, known for her acclaimed works of fiction that often explore the experiences of South Asian women and immigrants. She was born on (July 29, 1956), in Kolkata, India, and later moved to the United States for her education. Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni has written numerous books, including novels, short stories, poetry, and children's literature.

Divakaruni has often focused on women's voices in mythology, providing a platform for the often overlooked or marginalized female characters in ancient myths. Many mythological stories have male-centric narratives and female characters are often relegated to secondary roles. Divakaruni's works, such as *The Palace of Illusions* and *The Forest of Enchantments*, offers a feminist perspective, giving voice and agency to female characters in mythology and reimagining their roles and stories. Her works bring a fresh perspective to these ancient stories, making them relevant and resonant for modern readers.

Amish Tripathi is a well-known Indian author who is known for his work in the historical fiction and mythology genres. He was born in Mumbai, India. Amish Tripathi is known for his critically acclaimed and best-selling book series, *The Shiva Trilogy*, which includes the books *The Immortals of Meluha*, *The Secret of the Nagas*, and *The Oath of the Vayuputras*. This series reimagines the Hindu god Shiva in a modern, fictionalized setting, blending mythology, history, and fantasy.

Amish Tripathi's writing style is characterized by his unique blend of mythology and history, creating a rich and immersive world that draws upon Indian culture, spirituality, and philosophy. His works often explore philosophical and moral concepts, and he weaves elements of adventure, romance, and political intrigue into his stories.

Amish Tripathi's writing has been widely recognized for its fresh and innovative take on Indian mythology, making him one of the most popular and influential contemporary authors in India.

He is known for reimagining and retelling Indian mythological stories in a contemporary, fictionalized setting, blending elements of mythology, history, and fantasy. Through his writing, Amish Tripathi has brought a fresh and innovative perspective to Indian mythology, presenting familiar stories in a new light and offering readers a unique interpretation of traditional tales. He has also been known to challenge conventional beliefs and push the boundaries of traditional storytelling, making his work distinct and thought-provoking. His books have been widely popular in India and beyond, earning him a prominent place in contemporary Indian literature and mythology-based fiction.

Homer, author of the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*. Although these two great epic poems of ancient Greece have always been attributed to the shadowy figure of Homer, little is known of him beyond the fact that he was the name attached in antiquity by the Greeks themselves to the poems.

He incorporated various mythological elements, gods, and heroes into his epic poems, creating a rich tapestry of characters and stories that have become central to Greek mythology. For example, in the *Iliad*, he portrays the Greek gods and goddesses as powerful and capricious beings who intervene in the Trojan War, taking sides and influencing the outcome of the conflict.

Homer's writings also shaped and popularized many of the myths and legends that are now synonymous with Greek mythology, such as the story of the Trojan War, the

adventures of the hero Odysseus, and the exploits of the warrior Achilles. His works were widely circulated and transmitted orally for generations, contributing to the formation and evolution of Greek mythology as a complex and multifaceted body of stories, beliefs, and traditions.

Plato was a prominent Greek philosopher, mathematician, and founder of the Academy in Athens, which is considered one of the earliest institutions of higher learning in the Western world. He was a student of Socrates, another renowned Greek philosopher, and later became a teacher and mentor to Aristotle, one of the most influential philosophers in history.

He is known for his extensive philosophical writings, which are considered foundational works of Western philosophy. He wrote in the form of dialogues, using conversations between characters to explore a wide range of philosophical topics, including metaphysics, epistemology, ethics, politics, and aesthetics. Plato's works are primarily based on his philosophical ideas and concepts, which he explored through the use of dialogues. In his dialogues, Plato presents conversations between various characters, often including his teacher Socrates as a central figure, to examine a wide range of philosophical topics, including metaphysics, epistemology, ethics, politics, and aesthetics.

One of the central perspectives in Plato's works is his theory of Forms or Ideas. Plato's works are based on his philosophical ideas and concepts, including his theory of Forms, emphasis on dialectical reasoning, and exploration of the relationship between the individual and society. His perspectives in his works reflect his idealistic vision of reality

and his belief in the importance of reason, critical thinking, and the pursuit of truth and wisdom.

Madeline Miller is a contemporary author known for her novels based on Greek mythology. Her works are primarily based on ancient Greek myths and legends, and she reinterprets and retells these stories in a fresh and modern way. Her two most well-known novels are: Madeline Miller's works are known for their attention to detail, rich characterization, and emotional depth. She draws from her extensive knowledge of Greek mythology to create engaging narratives that offer new perspectives on familiar myths and legends, making them accessible to modern readers while staying true to their timeless appeal.

*The Song of Achilles* This novel tells the story of the Greek hero Achilles, as seen through the eyes of his companion Patroclus. It explores their relationship and delves into the emotional complexities of their bond, set against the backdrop of the Trojan War. Madeline Miller pays close attention to the characterization of mythological figures in her novels. She seeks to humanize these characters, delving into their emotions, motivations, and struggles, and portraying them as complex and multifaceted individuals with relatable experiences and vulnerabilities.

Overall, Madeline Miller's works focus on the humanization of mythological characters, exploring their emotions, relationships, and struggles, while also incorporating feminist themes and offering fresh retellings and reinterpretations of familiar myths. Her novels provide contemporary readers with a new lens through which to view and appreciate the rich and timeless stories of Greek mythology.

Rick Riordan is a contemporary American author known for his young adult fiction novels, particularly those that incorporate mythology from various cultures, such as Greek, Roman, Norse, Egyptian, and more. He is best known for his popular book series, including the Percy Jackson & The Olympians series, the Heroes of Olympus series, the Kane Chronicles series, the Trials of Apollo series, and more. Zachary Mason is an American author known for his contemporary fiction and reimagining of classical myths and stories.

He is best known for his debut novel *The Lost Books of the Odyssey*, published in 2007, which gained critical acclaim for its unique approach to retelling the ancient Greek epic, *The Odyssey*, by Homer. In *The Lost Books of the Odyssey*, Zachary Mason presents a series of short stories that expand upon and reconfigure episodes from *The Odyssey*, offering different perspectives, interpretations, and variations of the original tale. The novel is known for its experimental and imaginative style, with Mason playing with form, language, and structure to create a fresh and unconventional retelling of the classic story.

Margaret Atwood, in full Margaret Eleanor Atwood, born November (18, 1939), in Ottawa, Ontario, Canada, is a Canadian writer best known for her prose fiction and feminist perspective. She began writing at age five and resumed her efforts, more seriously, a decade later. After completing her university studies at Victoria College at the University of Toronto, Atwood earned a master's degree in English literature from Radcliffe College, Cambridge, Massachusetts, in 1962. Margaret Atwood is one of the most talented, powerful, and intelligent writers in the West today.

One of her most famous novels is *The Handmaid's Tale*, published in 1985, which has been widely recognized as a classic of dystopian literature. It has been adapted into

various forms, including a successful television series, and has gained widespread critical acclaim for its feminist themes and incisive social commentary. She explores themes of identity, selfhood, and individuality. She delves into questions of personal and cultural identity, the construction of self, and the complexities of human nature in her works. She portrays the abuse of power and the corrupting influence of power in her works.

She examines how power can be wielded for control, manipulation, and exploitation, and the repercussions of such abuses. These are some of the main themes that Margaret Atwood's writing often focuses on. Her works are known for their thought-provoking ideas, incisive social commentary, and nuanced exploration of complex themes that resonate with readers on multiple levels.

“Every Myth is a Version of Truth” (Atwood, 94) Mythology has a rich literary tradition that spans cultures and periods. Many writers, including Atwood, find inspiration in the rich symbolism, archetypes, and narratives of mythology, which offer a rich tapestry of stories, characters, and themes that can be woven into their works she has made significant contributions to Greek mythology through her literary works. She has drawn inspiration from various Greek mythological motifs and themes, incorporating them into her writing in innovative and thought-provoking ways. Some of her works in mythology are *The Penelopiad*, *The Robber Bride*, *The Heart Goes Last*, *Alias Grace*,

Atwood may be drawn to mythology as a way to examine and comment on these timeless aspects of the human experience in her writing. Often she refers to rich in allegory and symbolism, providing powerful and evocative imagery that can be used to explore contemporary issues and themes. Atwood may employ mythology as a literary

tool to create allegories or symbols that represent real-world concepts or ideas in her writing, allowing her to convey deeper meanings and insights to her readers.

She is a creative and imaginative writer and may be drawn to mythology as a way to tap into her artistic creativity, pushing the boundaries of storytelling and creating unique and original narratives that resonate with readers. Like many writers, Atwood may have a personal interest or passion for mythology. She chooses to write about mythology to show her multifaceted and complex, influenced by her artistic vision, creative process, and personal interests.

Through her exploration and reinterpretation of mythology in her writing, Atwood has made significant contributions to contemporary literature, offering fresh perspectives, allegories, and insights that continue to captivate readers. *The Penelopiad* is a novella it is published in the year 2005 reimagining the myth of Penelope, the wife of the Greek hero Odysseus, from Homer's epic poem *The Odyssey*, to give Penelope her voice and challenging the traditional portrayal of women in mythology. Atwood has often been interested in exploring feminist themes and challenging gender roles in her works, and *The Penelopiad* is one such example.

She slightly referred to her characteristics in this work because she also struggled during her married life and go through depression after this she realized that her life was so messy and lazy. Again she started to heal and she want to recreate the mythology character Penelope from Homer. Both imaginary and reality characters play valuable things in society.

Atwood's motivation for writing "Penelopiad" may have been multifaceted. One aspect could be her interest in giving voice to female characters who have been

traditionally marginalized or silenced in literature. In *The Odyssey*, Penelope is a secondary character whose perspective is not fully explored, and she is often seen through the lens of her husband's story.

"Penelopiad" offers Penelope the opportunity to tell her own story, providing a feminist reimagining of her character and her experiences. Atwood was drawn to the character of Penelope, who is often depicted as a faithful and patient wife waiting for her husband's return, but whose own story is not fully explored in *The Odyssey*. In *The Penelopiad*, Atwood offers Penelope the opportunity to tell her side of the story in her own words, providing a fresh perspective on her character and her experiences.

Through Penelope's voice, Atwood addresses issues such as gender, power dynamics, and agency, exploring the challenges and limitations that women faced in ancient Greek society and how their stories were often overlooked or marginalized. Atwood also challenges traditional gender roles and stereotypes through Penelope's character. She portrays Penelope as a strong and independent woman who uses her intelligence, wit, and resourcefulness to navigate the patriarchal society she lives in and to protect her interests and those of her son.

She also addresses the idea of the "silenced" or overlooked female voice in history and mythology, and gives Penelope a platform to speak her truth and share her perspective on the events that transpire in *The Odyssey*. Atwood mainly focuses on giving voice to Penelope, challenging traditional portrayals of women in mythology, exploring feminist themes such as gender, power dynamics, and agency, and reinterpreting mythological stories from a contemporary and feminist perspective.

Kavita Kane (born 5 August 1966), is an Indian writer and former journalist. She is known for writing Mythology-fiction. All of her books are based on Indian mythology. Her bestselling novel is *Karna's Wife: The Outcast Queen*. She is an author of the new era of retelling. She was born in Mumbai, and Kavita Kane grew up in other cities like Patna, Delhi, and Pune. These are her work *Sita's Sister* this book reimagines the character of Uruvi, the younger sister of Sita, from the Hindu epic *The Ramayana*.

Kavita Kane's works are often inspired by Indian mythology, particularly the stories of female characters who are often overlooked or marginalized in traditional narratives. She has drawn inspiration from Hindu epics like *Ramayana* and *Mahabharata*, as well as lesser-known myths and legends from Indian folklore. She is also inspired by historical figures, particularly women, who have left their mark on history. She has written about famous personalities like Sita, Menaka, Karna's Wife, Urmila, and Ganga, and has given them a fresh perspective and a unique voice through her imaginative retellings.

Kavita Kane's work is also influenced by social issues that affect women, such as gender discrimination, domestic violence, and societal expectations. She uses her writing as a means to raise awareness about these issues and advocate for women's rights and equality. *Menaka's Choice* This book is based on the story of Menaka, a celestial nymph from Hindu mythology. It presents a fictional account of Menaka's life and her relationship with Vishvamitra, a sage known for his penance, and delves into the complexities of love, desire, and duty.

*Lanka's Princess* This book portrays the life of Surpanakha, a pivotal character from the Ramayana, who is often depicted as a negative character. It offers a nuanced

perspective on Surpanakha's life, her motivations, and her transformation from a princess to a demoness.

Kavita Kane's works are known for exploring the untold stories and emotions of female characters from Indian mythology. Her retellings provide a fresh and nuanced interpretation of familiar mythological tales, giving voice to the often-overlooked female characters and shedding light on their perspectives and experiences. Overall, Kavita Kane's decision to write mythology may be motivated by a combination of factors, including a desire to represent female characters, explore feminine identity, reinterpret myths, highlight universal themes, and indulge her passion for mythology.

She may have wanted to use mythology as a canvas for her creativity and imagination, offering fresh interpretations of familiar stories in a way that challenges conventional notions and offers a more diverse representation of characters and their experiences. She simply has a deep-rooted passion for mythology and a keen interest in exploring its rich tapestry of stories, characters, and themes.

Overall, Kavita Kane's decision to write mythology may be motivated by a combination of factors, including a desire to represent female characters, explore feminine identity, reinterpret myths, highlight universal themes, and indulge her passion for mythology. *Karna's Wife: The Outcast's Queen* is fiction and magic-realism written by Kavita Kane. Published in the year 2014 it tells the extraordinary story of Karna, the unsung hero of the Mahabharata, through the eyes of his wife Uruvi, bringing his story to the reader from a unique perspective.

An accomplished Kshatriya princess who falls in love with and dares to choose the 'sutaputra' over Arjun, Uruvi must come to terms with the social implications of her

marriage and learn to use her love and intelligence to be accepted by Karna and his family. Though she becomes his mainstay, counseling and guiding him, his blind allegiance to Duryodhana is beyond her power to change.

The story of Uruvi and Karna unfolds against the backdrop of the struggle between the Pandavas and the Kauravas. As events build up leading to the great war of the Mahabharata, Uruvi is a witness to the twists and turns of Karna's fate; and how it is inextricably linked to divine design. A splendid saga from the pages of the Mahabharata, *Karna's Wife: The Outcast's Queen* brings its characters alive in all their majesty.

The novel delves into Uruvi's emotions, struggles, and relationships, including her love and loyalty towards Karna, as well as her conflicts with societal norms and expectations. It portrays her as a strong and independent woman who must navigate the complexities of the patriarchal society of that time, and face the consequences of her association with Karna, who is an ally of the Kauravas, the antagonists in *The Mahabharata*.

*Karna's Wife: The Outcast's Queen* mainly focuses on exploring Uruvi's character, her experiences, and her relationship with Karna, while also shedding light on other themes and characters from the Mahabharata, making it a compelling read for those interested in Indian mythology and historical fiction. Her works mainly focus on the book and delve into the challenges faced by Uruvi as a woman in the patriarchal society of ancient India.

The book delves into the life of Uruvi, who is a princess of Pukeya and falls in love with Karna, a skilled warrior and one of the central characters in the Mahabharata. Despite Karna's low caste and social status as an outcast, Uruvi defies societal norms and

chooses him as her husband. The novel portrays Uruvi's struggles as she navigates the complexities of being married to a man who is constantly faced with discrimination due to his background.

The novel portrays the deep bond of love and loyalty between Uruvi and Karna. It delves into their relationship, their emotions, and the sacrifices they make for each other, despite the challenges and consequences they face due to Karna's low birth status. As Karna is considered an outcast in the Mahabharata due to his low birth status, the book addresses the theme of caste discrimination and the social stigma associated with it. It offers a fresh perspective on the Mahabharata, shedding light on the lesser-known characters and their struggles, and has been well-received by readers for its unique and thought-provoking approach to Indian mythology.

In this above study, I discuss the phase of mythology, cultural values that are based on Greek and Indian Mythologies, and the old mythical values that are ideal however those values cannot be applied to today's world or lifestyle. In ancient myths, the feminine characters were restricted to domestic circles and were never given equal opportunities in life. Our route values and dharma were taught through the stories of mythology, and getting those values in modern form through modern writers helps to store the impeccable values of epic mythologies, one justified personality according to his/her perspective on life.

## Chapter II

### The Mythical Characters in Greek and Indian Mythology

“According to Psychiatrist Carl Jung, Myth is a necessary aspect of the human psyche which needs to find meaning and order in the world.”(23-24) Myth has not persisted as a cohesive portrayal of society in man and the world of prehistoric mankind. The process of creating a world order in mythic consciousness as a representation of observation, experience, and event characterization. It is very evidently expressed in the creation of mass representations, the historical substrate of awareness.

Through myth, humans frequently construct an alternative reality. Science's grand theorists had to ignore everything that did not fit the big explanatory hypothesis or seemed unimportant. History demonstrates the significance of researching myths to give a key to human culture. Looking at the subject matter of mythology is the quickest and most straightforward method to understand it. Myths are conventional tales about gods, kings, and heroes in the widest sense.

Myths frequently describe how the world was created and, on occasion, how it will end. They explain how the gods formed mankind. They show the interactions between different gods and between gods and humans. They offer a set of moral principles to follow. Additionally, myths describe the lives of heroes who stand for a society's ideals. Myths mostly discuss the important features of human and superhuman life.

It is easy to forget this in reading about the many absurd, barbaric, comic, grotesque, or sentimental occurrences in various mythologies. Yet, on the whole, myths

have a certain dignity and eloquence precisely because they do grapple with important matters. Beyond these benefits, however, a sympathetic reading of myths from different cultures and eras can prevent us from developing a restricted perspective and being mired in our little circle of pressing issues.

The wonders that before scientific reasoning's increasing illumination of our experiences can be shown to us through myths. Mythology is help to develop the culture and norms of society. Because mythology is an expression of the beliefs, values, and experiences of the people who create it, Myths reflect culture. Natural events, advice on how to live a happy life, and a feeling of meaning and purpose in the universe are all frequently explained by myths. Stories like this are influenced by the cultural setting in which they are recounted, and they may tell a lot about the beliefs, anxieties, and aspirations of a culture.

As an illustration, the cultural values of the people who inspired various creation myths across the world are reflected in them. Some myths claim that a superior deity created the universe on purpose, while others contend that chaos or the interactions of several gods caused the world to emerge spontaneously. These variations are a reflection of how individuals perceive their role in the universe and their relationship to the divine.

Similar to this, myths about gods and heroes frequently represent cultural perspectives on morality, gender, and power. While some cultures prize cunning, wisdom, or compassion more than physical prowess and bravery, others honor heroes who triumph through these traits. The duties and traits of gods can also be a reflection of societal aspirations and phobias, such as the value of fertility or the requirement for catastrophe protection. Thus, mythology can act as a mirror for culture, reflecting its

ideals, philosophies, and aspirations. We may learn more about a culture's worldview and the individuals who formed it by examining its mythology.

As myths continuously reflect the attitudes and values of the society in which they are created, gender roles play a significant role in mythology. Frequently, myths that portray men as strong and logical and women as emotional serve to reinforce traditional gender roles and expectations. The depiction of gods and goddesses is one way that gender roles are conveyed in mythology. In many pantheons, masculine deities are portrayed as strong and in charge, while feminine deities are linked to domestic work, fertility, and caring.

It also frequently contains gendered stereotypes and reinforces traditional gender roles. For example, many myths depict men as warriors and heroes, while women are often portrayed as passive and in need of protection. Women may also be associated with negative qualities such as deceit, vanity, or emotional instability, while men are often associated with positive traits such as strength, courage, and wisdom. To understand the significance of both gender roles in society, I compare the same traits in two distinct mythologies.

The figures from ancient mythology aid in understanding both human life and cultural dharma. Both mythology characters, in my opinion, have relatable values and social norms. And I'm curious about how their morals help us to comprehend human existence and the birth cycle. Moreover, they impart wisdom to others through the way they behave and by abiding by other values and sentiments. It aids in my comprehension of human civilization and the progression of human life.

In Greek mythology, Cupid is a Roman god rather than a Greek deity. The Roman version of the Greek god Eros is called Cupid. A common image of Cupid is that of a winged, chubby child with a bow and arrows. He is revered as the deity of passion, desire, and love and is infamous for his flirtatious actions that lead to amorous sentiments in others. Cupid was typically described as a jovial and mischievous deity who would hurl arrows at gods and humans to incite loving affection.

His arrows were thought to possess magical abilities that might inspire desire or love in people who were struck by them. The Cupid and Psyche myth is Cupid's most well-known mythological narrative, and it is frequently used as a metaphor for the journey of the human spirit toward love and enlightenment. In this tale, Cupid falls in love with the mortal princess Psyche, and after facing many difficulties, the two of them are married. It's common to see Cupid in romantic scenarios in art, such as launching arrows at lovers or embracing them. In contemporary society, Cupid is a symbol of Valentine's Day and romantic love.

Sometimes Cupid was shown with a blindfold, signifying the irrational and blind nature of love. This presentation highlighted the notion that love is irrational and may blindside anyone at any time, defying logic or reason. Because of his cunning nature in making people fall in love or have romantic impulses, Cupid was sometimes portrayed as mischievous, playful, and even wicked. In works of art and literature, he was frequently shown using his arrows to tease or mislead both mortals and gods, producing amusing or fantastical events.

The Hindu god Kamadeva, also known as the god of love, desire, and passion, also goes by the name Manmatha. In Hinduism, Kamadeva is revered as the holy being

who ignites the passion for love and desire in the hearts of people, demigods, and other living things. Hindu legend describes Kamadeva as a gorgeous young man with arrows with flower tips and a sugarcane bow that is strung with a string of honeybees. He is reported to be riding a parrot, which stands for the love language. Rati, the goddess of love, beauty, and pleasure, is Kamadeva's consort. Kamadeva is frequently consulted for issues about romance, relationships, and marital happiness since his function is to arouse love and desire amongst people. He is also related to pleasure-seeking, creativity, and fertility.

Kamadeva is a Hindu mythology character appearing in several writings, including the Vedas, Puranas, and the Mahabharata epic. During the Hindu festival of Holi, also known as the festival of colors and love, he is frequently respected and honored. Many rituals and festivities pay homage to his playful and mischievous character during this time. They were often shown as masculine in their conventional duties and activities, and they were frequently portrayed as young, attractive gods with youthful features.

It's crucial to remember, though, that gender roles and standards in ancient mythology were nuanced and varied throughout many countries and eras. Manmatha and Cupid may have been portrayed in certain instances to represent specific gender roles and expectations that were common in the civilizations where their stories were transmitted, while in other instances they may have defied conventional gender conventions.

Manmatha, for instance, is frequently portrayed in Hindu mythology as a masculine deity with a sugarcane bow and arrows with flower-tipped tips. He is frequently linked to masculinity, virility, and power. He is revered as the deity of desire

and is thought to have the ability to arouse amorous impulses and forge strong emotional bonds between people.

Similar to this, Cupid is frequently portrayed in Roman mythology as a male deity with a bow and arrows, and he is frequently connected to masculine qualities like power, strength, and control over people's emotions. He is renowned as the god of love and is frequently represented as a cheeky and amusing character as well as a strong deity with the ability to sway people's hearts and thoughts.

It's important to keep in mind, though, that mythology is frequently intricate and diverse, and there may be occasions in which Manmatha and Cupid are portrayed in more complicated or unconventional gender roles. For instance, Manmatha is portrayed as androgynous or gender-fluid in certain tales, blurring the distinction between conventional duties for men and women.

Similar to how people express love and desire differently, Cupid has been depicted in literature and art with diverse degrees of gender ambiguity or fluidity. Gender roles and expectations in mythology, as in any cultural or historical setting, may be complicated and diverse, thus it's vital to analyze and comprehend them with consideration for cultural and historical contexts.

In Greek mythology, the goddess Hecate is linked to the moon, ghosts, witchcraft, sorcery, and crossroads. She is frequently shown with three heads or three faces, signifying her link to the past, present, and future. Hecate is seen as a complicated and enigmatic deity with a function that goes beyond classical Greek mythology. She was regarded as a chthonic goddess, connected to the Underworld, and frequently shown carrying torches or keys to represent her function as a defender and guide for souls.

In the Hindu tantric tradition, Dhumavati, a Hindu goddess from ancient Indian mythology, is frequently regarded as one of the ten Mahavidyas, or the great wisdom goddesses. She is linked to traits like disorder, gloom, widowhood, destitution, and unluckiness. Dhumavati is frequently shown as an aged, emaciated lady with messy hair, torn clothing, and clutching a broom or a winnowing basket.

According to Hindu mythology, Dhumavati is said to be the goddess Parvati's or Shakti's manifestation, which stands for the element of annihilation and disintegration. She is revered as a fiery and strong goddess who can wreak havoc and bring about transformation. Dhumavati is sometimes referred to as the "Great Void" or the "Goddess of Smoke" owing to her connection to the element of smoke. She is also related to the idea of emptiness or the void.

She is revered as a goddess who may aid searchers in overcoming the constraints of ordinary life and achieving spiritual enlightenment. She is also considered a symbol of the transience and deceptive nature of the material world. Hecate from Greek mythology is frequently portrayed as a lunar goddess with the power to shine light into the night and uncover secrets. She is connected to the moon and the night represents her function as a source of light, direction, and illumination during periods of uncertainty or darkness. This paints her as a person who values knowledge, insight, and enlightenment and who aids others in coping with life's difficulties and uncertainties.

The dark and shadowy sides of existence, such as turmoil, devastation, and the unknown, are also connected to Dhumavati. She is shown as having non-conforming feminine traits that may be seen as being outside of social standards. By questioning conventional ideas of femininity and promoting acceptance and integration of the dark

and shadow sides of life, Dhumavati's values serve as a reminder of the need of embracing all facets of existence, including all of their difficulties and uncertainties.

Hecate and Dhumavati are both associated with feminine qualities they are often portrayed as a protector of women and their gender roles were often defined by societal norms and the concept of the divine feminine. They encompass a wide range of qualities including destructive and transformative aspects and where notions of femininity can go beyond traditional roles.

Kali is a deity from ancient Indian mythology. She is seen as a ferocious and strong manifestation of the Divine Mother, or Shakti, and is frequently linked to wreaking havoc, turmoil, and transformation. Typically, Kali is shown as a dark-skinned goddess with wild hair, a sticking-out tongue, and several arms. She frequently carries a sword or a trident. "She unleashed her inner goddess and became the woman her soul knew she could be."(Schaper, 38)

According to Hindu myth, Kali represents the endless cycle of creation, preservation, and destruction as the personification of time. She is linked to sexuality, fertility, and feminine energy. Kali is frequently praised for her abilities as a liberator, guardian, and annihilation of evil forces. As a complicated and varied goddess, Kali's symbolism and importance fluctuate throughout Hindu traditions and practices. As one of the Mahavidyas, a collection of ten manifestations of the Divine Mother in Hindu Tantra, Kali is occasionally linked to other deities like Durga and Parvati.

In Greek mythology, the goddess Nemesis was linked to divine vengeance and retribution. She was frequently shown as a winged goddess carrying a set of scales or a balance, signifying justice and balance. People who displayed hubris, and arrogance, or

disobeyed the natural order were said to be punished by Nemesis, who was seen as the executor of divine justice. She was revered as a primordial goddess and was connected with the Moirai, the trio of goddesses that oversaw human destiny. Nemesis was frequently invoked in oaths and curses, and it was thought that people who betrayed their pledges or did bad crimes would face punishment.

Kali is frequently represented as triumphing over vanity and ignorance. One well-known tale has her fighting the demon Daruka, who stands for naivete and illusion. The victory of Kali over Daruka represents the necessity to dispel illusion and ignorance to reach spiritual enlightenment. In their quest for truth and self-realization, individuals may learn from this narrative the importance of pursuing knowledge, eliminating ignorance, and overthrowing ego. She is regarded as a kind mentor who aids her followers in their spiritual development. Her stories motivate people to pursue greater truths, develop spiritual awareness, and work toward self-realization. She represents femininity's maternal and compassionate qualities in her stories by emphasizing the mother's unconditional love and care.

One valuable story of Nemesis from Greek mythology is the tale of Narcissus. The story of Narcissus is a cautionary tale about vanity, self-absorption, and the consequences of hubris. The young hunter was particularly attractive and well-known for his amazing beauty. He loved his reflection so much that he would spend hours staring at it in a pool of water, unable to take his eyes off it.

Narcissus' conceit and haughtiness were recognized by Nemesis, the goddess of divine vengeance. She determined to give him a lesson for his overwhelming self-love and pride. Narcissus fell in love with his reflection when she took him to a body of water

where he could see it. Narcissus couldn't help but become fixated on his reflection. Narcissus's narrative serves as a warning against the perils of excessive self-love, conceit, and arrogance. It emphasizes the negative effects of focusing just on one's reflection and disregarding the importance of others around us. The moral of the narrative emphasizes the value of self-awareness, humility, and understanding one's limitations.

While both Nemesis and Kali are mythical entities linked to strength, justice, and vengeance, their gender roles vary in the mythologies in which they are found. While Kali is often linked with ferocious feminine strength but also defies conventional gender stereotypes in Hindu mythology, Nemesis is frequently shown as a female goddess with maternal and protecting impulses.

Because she was also viewed as a strong and intimidating force who brought about repercussions for crime, Nemesis's function as a dispenser of justice and retribution was not constrained by conventional gender roles. Although Kali is said to encompass both male and feminine forces, she is also known to transcend conventional gender categories. She is viewed as a representation of female strength and independence and is frequently linked to the idea.

Artemis was the goddess of the moon, the wild, and the hunt in classical Greek mythology. She was one of the twelve Olympian deities and was regarded as the child of Titaness Leto and Zeus, the ruler of the gods. Artemis was frequently shown as a young girl holding a bow and arrows. She was renowned for her hunting prowess as well as her capacity to care for and protect wild creatures.

She was likewise linked to the moon, and she was also known as the "Lady of the Wilds." Artemis was revered as a virgin goddess who was fiercely independent and

devoted to everything she set her mind to. She is also mentioned in several myths concerning the moon, which is also known as "Artemis' torch."

In traditional Indian mythology, Chandra is the Hindu deity of the moon. He is frequently portrayed as a youthful, attractive guy. Since he is one of Hinduism's most revered deities, Chandra is supposed to have the ability to affect people's behavior and thinking because he is also linked to the mind and emotions. Chandra's influence is frequently linked to the full moon since it is seen to be a period of very high feelings and energy. Chandra is connected to fertility, growth, and change and is said to be the tides' ruler.

Artemis and Actaeon's tale. In this tale, a teenage hunter named Actaeon finds Artemis taking a bath in a creek. Artemis transforms him into a deer out of rage at being seen, and his hunting hounds then rip him to pieces. The focus on modesty and Artemis' dislike of males who treat women violently or disrespectfully are both evident in this tale.

Another story of Chandra and Rohini was one of Chandra's wives, and he favored her above his other wives. The other wives complained, and Chandra eventually agreed to spend less time with Rohini. This story reflects Chandra's emphasis on fairness and the need to treat everyone equally. Both Artemis and Chandra have similar characters in their respective mythology. She is frequently portrayed as a proficient archer and hunter who is fiercely independent and protective of young ladies since she is the goddess of the hunt and the outdoors. She is also linked to the value of female independence and purity.

On the other hand, Chandra is a masculine god who is frequently portrayed as a youthful, attractive guy with white skin, and he is connected to intellect and emotions. The gender roles of Chandra and Artemis in mythology are still separate even if both of

them are connected to traditionally male fields. Ancient Greek views on the value of female autonomy and purity are reflected in Artemis' emphasis on virginity and her function as a guardian of young women. Chandra's connection to feelings and fertility reflects prehistoric Indian views on the effect of men on the natural world. Chandra and Artemis both act as potent representations of the significance of gender roles in ancient mythology, illuminating the perspectives on gender and the roles that men and women were supposed to perform in those civilizations.

In Greek mythology from the past, Zeus is the ruler of the gods. He is frequently portrayed as a strong and commanding character since he is the deity of the sky and thunder. Zeus is frequently represented as a knowledgeable and righteous king who upholds justice and order in the universe. He is also well-known for his numerous relationships with mortal women and deities, many of which gave rise to demigods and heroes like Hercules and Perseus.

Zeus is commonly linked to thunder and lightning, and he is revered for his ability to influence the weather. Zeus is known for being the ruler of the gods as well as being connected to many other facets of ancient Greek culture, including law, hospitality, and law. A significant god in Hinduism and ancient Indian mythology is Indra. He is referred to be the ruler of the gods and is connected to rain, lightning, and thunder. He is frequently shown as an elephant-riding warrior carrying a thunderbolt. A variety of stories and legends surround Indra, who is regarded as one of the most significant gods.

Indra is said to deliver rain and fertility to the land and is connected to the monsoon season. He is frequently portrayed as a fearless, strong leader who works to keep the cosmos in balance. He is, however, also portrayed in some tales as having flaws

and being prone to excess and conceit. Indra, who stands for strength, power, and protection as well as the natural forces that were so significant to the inhabitants of ancient India has a significant place in Indian mythology. “The air is Zeus, Zeus earth, and Zeus the heaven, Zeus all that is, and what transcends them all.”(Aeschylus, 96)

Legend has it that Zeus and his siblings engaged in a protracted and horrific battle with the Titans, ultimately triumphing and rising to the throne of Mount Olympus. This tale was frequently cited to emphasize the value of bravery, tenacity, and resistance against overwhelming circumstances.

Another hand Indra's conflict with the demon Vritra is one of the most well-known Indra tales. Powerful demon Vritra possessed a boon that rendered him unbeatable save for one area on his body that was weak. Long battles were waged by Indra against Vritra, but he was unable to prevail until he discovered and struck the demon's weak point, killing him and releasing the waters that Vritra had been imprisoning. This tale is frequently used as a metaphor for the conflict between good and evil and the notion that with enough perseverance and will, even the strongest evil may be vanquished.

Zeus and Indra are both worshipped in their myths and given honor through sacrifice. They are said to bestow fertility, wealth, and safety upon those who worship them. Zeus and Indra are both renowned for having numerous kids. Zeus had countless relationships with both mortal women and deities, giving birth to numerous children, whereas Indra has numerous wives and lovers.

It shows that even the most powerful deities may make errors and exhibit bad tendencies and that it is vital to seek balance and humility in all things. They are both strong and beloved gods in their mythologies, yet they are not without their flaws and

negative elements. Even the most powerful beings can make mistakes and exhibit negative traits, which is why it's important to strive for balance and humility in everything.

Zeus and Indra are both strong and revered gods in their respective mythologies, but they are not without their flaws and negative aspects. Shiva is frequently seen as the universe's creator and destroyer, in charge of both processes. Shiva is also linked to renewal and regeneration since it is believed that the destructive side of Shiva is what makes way for new life and growth.

He is a complex and multidimensional god who represents both the constructive and destructive elements of the cosmos. He is regarded as one of Hinduism's main deities and is frequently referred to be the universe's destroyer or changer. He is also linked to different elements of the natural world, including mountains, rivers, and animals.

As the deity of the underworld, death, and the afterlife, Hades is one of the main figures in ancient Greek mythology. Hades is frequently portrayed as a menacing and gloomy character who is dreaded by both gods and humans. The underworld, often known as the region of the dead, is ruled by Hades. Greek mythology states that a person's spirit travels to the underworld when they pass away to be judged by Hades. Hades was frequently shown as a menacing, gloomy character.

He was also linked to representations of the afterlife and the underworld, such as the bident and the helm of darkness, which made the bearer invisible. Despite his terrifying reputation, Hades had a significant and crucial role in Greek mythology, serving as a symbol of the Greeks' belief in the afterlife and the cycle of life and death.

“Hateful to me as the gates of Hades is that man who hides one thing in his heart and speaks another.”(Homer, The Iliad, 168)

The Poison and the Story of Shiva According to this legend, the gods and demons stirred up a lethal poison that threatened to wipe out the cosmos while churning the ocean of milk. Shiva ingested the poison and kept it in his throat, becoming blue, to rescue the world. This narrative emphasizes the need of giving up one's interests to serve those of others. Ancient Indian mythology tales and legends about Shiva still in people the importance of sacrifice, selflessness, unity, harmony, loyalty, dedication, strength, courage, and resolve.

The dishonest king Sisyphus is sentenced to the underworld to push a rock up a hill for all of eternity just to have it tumble back down again. The moral of this story is that choices have consequences and that dishonesty and cunning will always result in failure. Ancient Greek mythology's tales and traditions about Hades tackle significant themes and concepts including respect for boundaries and permission, love and loss, the cyclical cycle of life, humility, and respect for authority, the dangers of deceit and trickery, and the repercussions of our actions.

Hades is often represented as a masculine deity, and he is frequently linked to the underworld, death, and gloom. He is frequently portrayed as a strong, feared deity who governs the afterlife and imposes stringent regulations. Power, dominance, and masculinity are further motifs that are connected to Hades.

Shiva, on the other hand, is often represented as a male deity in ancient Indian mythology, but he is also frequently seen with his feminine wife, Parvati. Together, they stand for the universe's ideal harmony of the masculine and feminine forces.

His status as a deity is frequently linked to the cyclical aspect of life, and he is associated with themes of creation, destruction, and rebirth. Shiva's position is more complicated and involves both masculine and female forces, in contrast to Hades, whose function is frequently linked to conventional notions of masculinity and power. Shiva's bond with his female companion Parvati also emphasizes the significance of gender equality and harmony in the world.

Abhimanyu is a figure from ancient Indian mythology who is most known for his participation in the Kurukshetra War, which serves as the main plot of the Mahabharata epic. One of the five Pandava brothers, Arjuna, and his wife Subhadra, the sister of Lord Krishna, had a son named Abhimanyu. He was a talented warrior who began mastering the art of battle while still inside his mother. He gained great notoriety during the Battle of Kurukshetra when he led the Pandava army's assault against the Chakravyuh, a Kaurava structure.

He was only aware of how to enter the formation; he had no idea how to exit it. As a result, he was eventually entrapped and murdered by Kaurava soldiers. Indian mythology views Abhimanyu as a sad hero because, although having unequalled courage and talents, he passed away at a young age, leaving his wife Uttara and their newborn son Parikshit behind. His tale is frequently used as an illustration of the strategic value of information as well as the disastrous results of not knowing all the specifics of a plan.

Greek mythology's Perseus is a mythical character well-known for killing the Gorgon Medusa and for his participation in other heroic deeds. He was the child of Zeus, the ruler of the gods, and Danae, a human. The head of Medusa, a terrifying monster with

snakes for hair who could turn anybody who gazed at her into stone, is said to have been dispatched by King Polydectes on a mission for Perseus to collect.

By utilizing a mirror to divert her attention away from him and a magical sword that Hermes had given him, Perseus was able to kill Medusa with the aid of the gods. Additionally, Perseus used Medusa's head to turn the sea monster into stone so that he could save Princess Andromeda from it. Later on, he established the Perseid dynasty and was crowned king of Mycenae. In ancient Greek art, Perseus was frequently shown clutching the head of Medusa, wielding a sword and a shield, and donning a winged hat and sandals.

Abhimanyu is renowned for his sacrifice and hardship as well. When he entered the battle, he was only a teenager. Despite being outnumbered and outgunned, he fought bravely against his adversaries. He could enter the Kauravas' complex Chakravayuha fighting configuration, but he was unsure how to leave it. He thus found himself encircled by foes and finally lost the battle.

The life of Abhimanyu has served as a metaphor for bravery, tenacity, and selflessness. He is held up as an example of someone who, even when young, was prepared to risk all for a cause they believed in. Overall, the tale of Abhimanyu has played a significant role in Indian mythology and continues to motivate and impart valuable lessons to people today. Throughout his life, Perseus encountered numerous obstacles and difficulties, but he was able to overcome them thanks to his cunning, bravery, and the support of the gods.

The tale of Perseus's struggle to defeat the Gorgon Medusa is among the most well-known ones related to him. Anyone who looked at the terrifying Medusa, who had

snakes for hair, would turn to stone. This obstacle was solved by Perseus by utilizing a mirrored shield to keep from staring directly at Medusa and by chopping off her head with a divinely-given magical sword. In his private life, Perseus also had to overcome difficulties, such as his attempt to save Andromeda from a sea monster and his battle to retake the throne of Mycenae. Perseus showed vital virtues like devotion, honor, and endurance in overcoming these obstacles.

Over time, people have learned important lessons and values from Perseus's tale, which has grown to be a significant part of Greek mythology. It teaches us the value of having fortitude and bravery in the face of hardship, as well as the significance of asking for assistance and advice from others while dealing with challenging situations. Perseus continues to inspire and teach important values to people to this day.

Abhimanyu had early instruction in the art of combat and was expected to carry out his responsibilities as a warrior and defender of his people. He was supposed to uphold the virtues of bravery, honor, and responsibility that were linked with his gender position as a conventional male warrior. Perseus, who is renowned for his valor.

He was the son of Zeus and Dana, and in war, he was renowned for his cunning and ingenuity. As opposed to Abhimanyu, Perseus was given magical tools and weapons to aid him in his quests rather than being raised as a traditional warrior. Instead of emphasizing physical strength and battle prowess, his gender role was more concerned with using knowledge and strategy to overcome obstacles. In their respective cultures, Abhimanyu and Perseus stand for opposing notions of manhood.

While Perseus represents a more complex and multifaceted ideal of masculinity that includes intelligence and cunning in addition to physical strength, Abhimanyu

represents the conventional ideal of the male warrior. It is crucial to remember that each culture has its definition of what is regarded as the ideal masculinity and that these are only archetypes.

The Greek deity of fire, smithing, and workmanship was Hephaestus. Although there are several birth stories for him, one of them suggests Hera bore him by herself as retaliation against Zeus. He was the son of Zeus and Hera. Hephaestus was frequently represented as being physically frail and ugly despite his significant function as a deity of the forge and metallurgy. He was mocked by the other gods because of rumors that he walked with a limp and looked deformed. Hephaestus, however, was also a talented artisan who is credited with making many of the most potent and significant items in Greek mythology.

Agni, the deity of fire in ancient Indian mythology, is one of the most revered deities in the Vedic faith. Agni is frequently shown as having red skin and two heads, signifying his dual roles as a cleanser and destroyer. In addition, he is claimed to have four limbs, seven tongues, and three legs, and he pulls a chariot drawn by blazing horses. During Vedic rituals and ceremonies, Agni is frequently invoked because it is thought of as the intermediary between the gods and humans. He is linked to sacrifice because people formerly believed that using fire may let them communicate with the gods.

Agni was also considered to be the divine messenger who brought offerings and communications to the gods. He is still revered as a god in Hinduism and is frequently invoked throughout numerous rites and festivities. He is seen as a cleanser and remover of impurities and is connected to the fire element. The Mahabharata claims that Agni assisted Arjuna and Krishna in destroying the Khandava Forest, which was inhabited by

several formidable demons. Agni promised to assist the two heroes in burning down the forest provided he was given an abundance of ghee (clarified butter).

Then, Arjuna and Krishna visited Kubera, the god of wealth, to obtain a substantial amount of ghee that they used to appease Agni. They were able to destroy the forest and extinguish the demons with Agni's assistance.

**Hephaestus and Hera's Trick,** According to a different tale, Hephaestus was asked by his mother Hera to trick Zeus into falling into a golden net. They planned a trap for Zeus when Hephaestus offered to assist. Zeus, who eventually got to escape, was furious with Hephaestus for supporting Hera. Hephaestus volunteered to give Zeus a particular throne as a gift as an act of penance. Zeus received the present without realizing the throne was a booby trap. Zeus was trapped while seated on the throne, and Hephaestus wouldn't release him unless Zeus consented to Hephaestus' demand to put a stop to the Trojan War.

In their respective mythologies, the gods of fire and craftsmanship Agni and Hephaestus are similar. As the god of fire and the intermediary between the gods and humans, Agni is frequently pictured as a male deity. Hephaestus, a masculine deity who is sometimes portrayed as physically distorted and weaker than other gods, is also connected to fire and craftsmanship in Greek mythology.

Both Agni and Hephaestus are masculine gods who are connected to fire and craftsmanship in terms of gender roles, but their significance and symbolism vary. Hephaestus is viewed as a creative, innovative deity who is physically weaker than other gods, but Agni is portrayed as a strong, commanding god who is connected to fertility.

Hephaestus and Agni each have significant roles in their respective mythology, although their roles and importance differ according to gender.

Varuna was one of the most notable gods in ancient Indian mythology and had a huge influence on the Vedic religion. He was related to the sky, the sun, the moon, and the stars. He was frequently shown as a kind deity in charge of the seas and other bodies of water. Varuna was connected to the universal rule and truth that controls the cosmos and was seen as the custodian of the cosmic order. Known as the deity of the rivers, Varuna was revered by those seeking protection from calamities like floods and droughts because they believed he could purify and cleanse

The trident, which was Poseidon's in Greek Mythology have a trademark weapon, was sometimes shown as being held by a bearded man. The waves, storms, and marine animals were said to be under his control, and he was in charge of safeguarding fishermen and sailors. Poseidon, the god of earthquakes, was also linked to the formation of new islands and the devastation of urban centers. Poseidon is a Greek mythological figure who is most closely related to the sea, earthquakes, and horses. He was one of the twelve Olympian deities, and he was Zeus and Hades' brother. His impact went beyond Greece as well; many prehistoric cultures, including the Romans, associated him with their sea gods.

The gods were challenged to a duel by an Asura called Namuchi, so they enlisted Varuna's assistance. Varuna concurred and presented them with a potent weapon known as a thunderbolt. Varuna was lauded for helping the gods vanquish Namuchi with the thunderbolt. He is described as being the friendliest and adhering to particular beliefs.

According to legend, Poseidon and the goddess Athena battled it out for the sovereignty of Athens. While Athena gave the city an olive tree, Poseidon swung his trident into the ground to create a spring. Athena became the protector goddess of the city because the people of Athens decided to accept her gift. In his rage about losing the contest, Poseidon set off a tremendous earthquake that partially levelled the city.

Both Varuna and Poseidon are masculine deities who are linked to water and the sea in their respective mythology. Poseidon is frequently portrayed as a strong, masculine deity who is also prone to rage and retaliation. He is frequently represented as a powerful and intimidating character and is connected to the rough, male world of the sea. He was connected to male-dominated occupations like fishing and sailing since he was a sea god. Varuna, on the other hand, is revered as a knowledgeable and righteous deity who is connected to the heavenly world of the sky, the sun, and water. Even though he is a man, his function is not entirely characterized by power or masculinity. Instead, he is viewed as a god who upholds cosmic justice and order, and he is frequently portrayed as a compassionate and forgiving person.

Ancient Roman and Greek mythology had a character named Aurora, often referred to as Eos, who was linked to dawn. She was frequently portrayed as a lovely goddess who appeared on the eastern horizon every morning to herald the rising of the sun and the beginning of a new day. The primary meaning of Aurora in mythology is that she represents dawn and the beginning of a new day. Her name simply means "dawn" in Latin, and she was frequently portrayed as a dazzling, lovely goddess. She was frequently depicted as a fresh start in literature and art, and many ancient societies revered her for being a source of warmth and light.

Ushas, the goddess of dawn in Hinduism, is one of the most revered gods in Rigveda, the religion's earliest holy literature. Ushas is frequently said to as a dazzling and lovely goddess who awakens the world each morning with light and fresh beginnings. Her appearance each morning is viewed as a representation of the universe's cyclical cycle, in which life and death are perpetually giving place to new beginnings. Overall, Ushas is a significant character in Hindu mythology who symbolizes the strength and beauty of dawn and the regeneration of life it offers.

Some myths claim that Ushas fell in love with Pururavas, a mortal man who was the ruler of the ancient lunar dynasty. Ushas was compelled to return to her celestial realm and put an end to their brief relationship. According to a different tale, Ushas was being chased by the demon Vritra, who wished to seize her and prevent her from illuminating the world. Ushas, however, managed to outsmart Vritra by making him believe that she would see him later. Ushas is a significant character who embodies the splendor and strength of dawn as well as the regeneration of life that it offers.

In one tale, Aurora develops feelings for Tithonus, a mortal. Tithonus is given immortality by her request to Jupiter, but she forgets to include a request for endless youth. As a result, Tithonus ages and becomes weak, and Aurora is ultimately compelled to confine him to a chamber. In a different legend, Aurora is credited for opening heaven's gates each morning so that the sun may rise. She is seen to be traveling around the world spreading dew in a chariot driven by winged horses.

In Roman mythology, Aurora is frequently portrayed as a helpless character whose primary duty is to bring forth the dawn every morning. In contrast, Ushas is

frequently depicted in Hindu mythology as an energetic and powerful character who, upon her entrance, chases out darkness and ushers in fresh life and regeneration.

Ushas and Aurora are both connected to romantic tales, although in different ways. It's common to see Aurora represented as a romantic figure who frequently experiences heartbreak after falling in love with humans. Their gender role exemplifies the kindest, most compassionate traits, and they stand for humanity's capacity for generosity in any circumstance since it makes one person's life more meaningful.

An ancient Greek goddess named Athena. She is frequently referred to be the goddess of learning, skill, and war. Athena is frequently portrayed as a strong, intelligent woman who is revered and appreciated by both humans and other gods. She is frequently portrayed wearing a helmet and holding a shield and is linked to some symbols, including the owl, the olive tree, and the spear.

Athena had a significant part in aiding the Greek armies in their battle with the Trojans in the Greek legendary epic known as the Trojan War. By the myth, Athena was one of three goddesses vying for the honor of being the fairest. Athena and Hera turned against Paris, a Trojan prince who was assigned to judge the competition, and declared Aphrodite the winner. In the Trojan War, Athena emerged as one of the Greeks' most ardent supporters. She aided the Greek army in several ways and was renowned for her strategic skills.

Ancient Indian mythology features Vidura prominently, especially in the Mahabharata epic. He is frequently portrayed as the Pandavas, the story's valiant protagonist, knowledgeable counselor, and advisor. Vidura had an important part in the Mahabharata epic, giving advice to the Pandavas and alerting them to the threats the

Kauravas represent. He provides them with advice on areas of statecraft, morals, and ethics and is frequently commended for his insight and foresight. Vidura, who is devoted to the Pandavas, is unbiased despite his allegiance to them and counsels them to follow the road of dharma, even if it means putting their interests aside.

In the end, Vidura retires to a life of renunciation after growing weary of the corrupt situation in the realm. Many Indians hold him in high regard as a great sage and philosopher who embodies wisdom, honesty, and objectivity. Vidura first attempted to stop the Mahabharata war by pleading with his half-brother Dhritarashtra to abandon his lust for money and power. Vidura, however, sided with the Pandavas in their conflict with the Kauravas when his counsel went unheeded. Vidura left politics once the Mahabharata battle was over and moved into the forest.

He is supposed to have achieved moksha, or freedom from the cycle of birth and death, via his steadfast commitment to virtue and devotion to dharma. Vidura is a significant character in the Mahabharata and constantly upholds dharma. When the Trojan prince Paris kidnaps Helen, the wife of the Greek king Menelaus, the Greeks decided to wage war against the Trojans, with Athena's assistance. One of the gods that supported the Greeks was Athena, who did so by persuading the Greek hero Achilles to take part in the conflict.

The shrewd Greek warrior Odysseus was renowned for his intellect and cunning. He had Athena as his patron deity, and she frequently came to him to provide him counsel. She also assisted him on his exhausting post-war trek home. One of the best fighters in the Greek army, Achilles was finally taken out by an arrow to the heel. One among the gods that lamented his passing was Athena, who also contributed to the

Greeks' victory over the Trojans. Athena made a physical and emotional contribution to the Trojan battle and fight.

In their respective civilizations, Athena and Vidura play distinctive gender roles according to their legendary traditions. However, some comparisons can be made between the two. In Greek mythology, the goddess of knowledge, cunning, and battle is known as Athena. She is frequently portrayed as a powerful, independent woman who defies gender norms. Athena is renowned for her wit, cunning, and capacity to safeguard and defend her home city and its populace.

In contrast, Vidura is a masculine figure from classical Indian mythology, more especially the Mahabharata. He is renowned for his discernment, objectivity, and commitment to justice. Although Vidura lacks Athena's physical prowess, he is admired for his intelligence and his capacity to give his brother and nephew sage advice. Athena and Vidura both put the established gender norms to the test.

While Vidura, despite being a man, is renowned for his compassion and his commitment to justice and morality, which are typically associated with female virtues, Athena is a strong goddess who is not limited to the traditional roles of women in ancient Greece. Overall, despite having some similarities in terms of their sage advice and wisdom, Athena and Vidura come from different cultural traditions and play different gender roles in their respective mythologies.

The explanatory myth, the heroic epic, the folk tale, the symbolic narrative, and the romance are the main categories of stories that are typically categorized as myths. It must be noted, however, that these stories are seldom encountered in their purest form

and frequently combine to serve various purposes. Myths can meet requirements that call for imaginative solutions since they have their origins in the imagination.

The most stunning records of human life are stories. While the architecture of the time is buried in ruins, many of the myths in this book have endured for thousands of years and are still as relevant today as they were when they were first recorded. This is because myths stem from the essential and enduring creative power of man. A coordinated branch of myth deals with the art of getting the gods to affect human purposes. This involves primitive religion with a technological overcast. The gods, having some human qualities, may respond to worship, ritual, supplication, and sacrifice.

They are never obliged to help human beings, but they can if they so desire. Gods sometimes show partiality by rewarding a few mortals with good fortune. But generally, nature is incalculable. One can never tell where lightning will strike, storms sink ships, wars, and plagues ravage, earthquakes wreck cities or floods, drought, and hail ruin crops. Myths frequently deal with the tributes one should pay a god, the chief of which is piety. And that tributes help to find themselves in the view of their idol gods or characters.

“Like the generations of leaves, the lives of mortal men. Now the wind scatters the old leaves across the earth, now the living timber bursts with the new buds and spring comes round again. And so with men: as one generation comes to life, another dies away.” (Homer, *The Iliad*, 103)

This study connects the gods and goddesses of Indian mythology to those of Greek mythology in the lines above. I learn about the traits of ancient mythology since it encourages and raises people's ideals. Gender values assist individuals to grasp the

norms, cultures, and values of human existence, for instance, Bhishma from the Mahabharata is renowned for fulfilling his word and promises therefore, the one who draws inspiration from Bhishma would immediately become a more valued person so, gender role seen as a most important thing in mythology to develop human values.

To understand the significance of both gender roles in society, I compare the same traits in two distinct mythologies. And the figures from ancient mythology aid in understanding both human life and cultural dharma. Both mythology characters, in my opinion, have relatable values and social norms. And I'm curious about how their morals help us to comprehend human existence and the birth cycle. Moreover, they impart wisdom to others through the way they behave and by abiding by other values and sentiments. It aids in my comprehension of human civilization and the progression of human life.

## **Chapter III**

### **Breaking Boundaries**

For many different kinds of triggers throughout history, mythology has been changed. One justification is to modify the tales by the prevalent cultural, social, and religious ideals. For instance, several mythical tales have been altered by various faiths to conform to their tenets and principles. Making the story more approachable for various audiences serves as another justification.

Older versions of myths could become harder to grasp or less accessible to current audiences as language and culture evolve through time. These tales may be improved by rewriting them so that readers of today can find them more interesting and current. Rewriting mythology may be a technique for exploring different interpretations and purposes for the tales. Different authors and artists could have different viewpoints on the same mythical figures and events, and their retellings might offer fresh views on these old tales.

The last method for recovering these tales from a dominant cultural narrative that may have usurped or misinterpreted them is to rewrite mythology. These tales may be utilized as a tool for cultural and political resistance by, for instance, rewriting myths from the viewpoint of marginalized populations. “Myths are public dreams, dreams are private myths.” (Joseph Campbell, 1904-1987, American academic)

In contemporary society, mythology is frequently reinterpreted as a means of connecting with the past and reflecting on our own cultural and historical background. We may comprehend the attitudes, assumptions, and customs that have influenced our

society and the globe better by analyzing the myths of our ancestors. Greek mythology has been used as inspiration in many pieces of literature, art, cinema, and other media, which have then been repeated or recreated in various ways.

Some of the most well-known and influential retellings of Greek mythology include numerous novels and characters that have been used to recreate or reinterpret the events and characters in various ways. Some of the more well-known and significant novels that use Greek mythology include Theseus and the Minotaur is reimaged in Mary Renault's novels *The King Must Die* and *The Bull from the Sea*, *The Penelopiad* by Margaret Atwood relates the tale of Odysseus's wife Penelope and gives the Odysseus's female characters voices.

*Circe* and *The Song of Achilles* by Madeline Miller recreate the tales of the sorceress Circe and the hero Achilles from fresh angles. The Percy Jackson and the Olympians series by Rick Riordan portray contemporary kids who learn they are demigods and go on adventures with Greek mythical figures. The Troy series by David Gemmell covers the Trojan War from many angles and adds fresh characters and themes to the narrative.

These are just a handful of the numerous books that have used Greek mythology as inspiration and reinterpreted these tales in fresh, captivating ways. Greek mythology's eternal themes and characters continue to enthrall and inspire readers all across the world, as seen by the story's lasting appeal. One of the most crucial elements in adapting mythologies is gender roles since they communicate principles to society and inspire individuals to follow in their footsteps. These are some of the most significant figures that are reimaged in Greek mythology.

The *Iliad* and *Odyssey*, two of Homer's epic works, detail the Trojan War and the travels of the hero Odysseus, respectively. Ovid's *Metamorphoses* is a collection of myths that explores themes of change and metamorphosis. The dramatizations of mythical tales and examinations of human character and the human condition in the plays of Sophocles, Euripides, and Aeschylus. The writings of Virgil, particularly the *Aeneid*, narrate the history of Rome's beginnings and largely reference Greek mythology.

In recent years, it has been fashionable to rewrite Indian mythology's works and characters. These works have recounted well-known tales and characters in fresh and creative ways, frequently including ideas and viewpoints that weren't included in the original texts. Here are several instances of altered Indian mythology texts and figures. *The Pregnant King* by Devdutt Pattanaik tells the tale of Yuvanashva, a king who takes a mystical elixir and becomes pregnant. It presents a fresh viewpoint on the idea of masculinity and questions conventional ideas about gender and sexuality. The book *Asura: Tale of the Vanquished* by Anand Neelakantan In this book's recounting of the Ramayana, Ravana, the evil king of Lanka, serves as the narrator.

It challenges the notion of Ravana as a villain and offers a fresh perspective on the story. Namita Gokhale's play *Shakuntala: The Play of Memory* portrays the tale of Shakuntala, a Mahabharata figure who falls in love with King Dushyanta. It presents a feminist reading of the narrative, emphasizing Shakuntala's autonomy and pressing conventional ideas about romantic love. In general, revised stories and characters in Indian mythology have provided unique views on classic tales and figures, forcing readers to consider the ideas and principles found in these antiquated writings.

Penelope is a daughter of Icarius of Sparta, and cousin of the beautiful Helen of Troy is portrayed as the quintessential faithful wife, a woman known for her intelligence and constancy. In addition to weeping and praying for the return of Odysseus, she cleverly deceives the many suitors who are swarming around her palace, eating Odysseus' estate in an attempt to force her to marry one of them. In this retelling of Homer's *The Odyssey* Margret Atwood beautifully portrayed Penelope as a powerful example of how a character can break stereotypes in modern society.

In traditional renditions of the narrative is frequently made as a weak and servile figure and she is portrayed as waiting passively for her husband to return home, but in *The Penelopiad*, She is resourceful, clever, and able to outsmart the suitors who are vying for her hand in marriage.

Kavita Kane is famous for introducing new characters in modern mythology as well as she introduced Uruvi in *Karna's Wife*. According to my study, neither the Vyasa-written Mahabharata nor medieval or pre-modern texts have any reference to the Uruvi figure. Only Vrushali and Supriya are referred to as wives of Karana. In Kattaikuttu, a type of play performed in Tamil Nadu's rural areas, Uruvi is referenced. Uruvi was referred to in a well-known episode of "Kana Moksham" as a Ponnuruvi, and her birth, marriage, and facts of her life were identical to those in the book about Karna's wife.

There's no more information was provided in any of the works from the ancient or pre-modern eras. Kane's Uruvi is portrayed as an independent and courageous woman who is unafraid to speak her mind and stand up for what she believes in. She is the princess of Pukeya, and Kunti is the stepmother of Uruvi. She is an intelligent and

strategic character who is skilled at navigating the complex political landscape of Mahabharata. He is called a healing girl

There are many similarities, Both Penelopiad and Uruvi have a reputation for being devoted. While Odysseus was at the battle and on his protracted trip home for Twenty years, Penelopiad remained devoted to him. Similar to Uruvi, who stuck with her husband Karna despite several obstacles. Both characters are shown to be witty and resourceful. While her husband was elsewhere, Penelopiad was renowned for her cunning ability to outsmart the suitors vying for her hand in marriage.

Uruvi assisted her husband in a variety of political and military affairs since she was a competent diplomat and strategist. Both characters display a strong sense of purpose and resolve. Despite demands to get remarried, Penelopiad remained devoted to her husband's memories. Similarly, Uruvi struggled to go against cultural conventions and expectations to fulfill her ambitions.

Penelopiad and Uruvi helped Atwood and Kane transform the gender roles in the stereotyped society and change the presumptions while also establishing strong ideals in their eras. They are real role models for love, parenthood, and bravery. In *Karna's Wife*, Uruvi breaks social norms by going for a relationship with Karna, who is seen as being lower socially than her.

As well as Penelope's voice, which is frequently ignored in conventional retellings of the Odyssey, narrates her tale. This emphasizes the value of women's ideas and opinions and can inspire women to come up and share their own experiences. On the other side, Uruvi's persona could encourage modern-day women to question gender conventions and expectations and pursue relationships and partnerships based on love

and respect for one another rather than on the expectations of society. Odysseus's wife, Penelope, provides him with emotional support through difficult moments. Without listening to what others had to say, both women unconditionally love their partners.

When Karna is slain in battle, Uruvi assumes his position as the family's leader and makes sure that his last rituals are carried out by the customs. She also adopts a motherly role for his boys and attempts to secure their upbringing. Odysseus wife, Penelope, is a woman who endures a long trip away from home when he returns from the Trojan War. Penelope is left in charge of running the home and raising their son Telemachus by herself at this period. She also fights off potential husbands while holding onto the hope that the one she loves would come back.

In all situations, Uruvi and Penelope are capable of stepping in to handle the household and family in place of their spouses. They exhibit strength and tenacity in the face of difficulty and can uphold their honor and dignity despite the difficulties they encounter. Their capacity to assume their spouses' duties is a testimonial to their own fortitude and leadership skills, and it serves as an example to others.

In Kane's and Atwood's respective works, the female characters alter their gender roles and challenge the dominant idea that males dominate society and perform the primary roles in families. They both successfully uphold both the family and the kingdom. They are the most motivating females for the majority of women who changed as a result of them. Other women believe that they act like stereotyped women because they suppress their emotions, opinions, strength of character, and intellectual qualities. However, the responsibilities of Uruvi and Penelopiad cause them to think differently.

The story of Homer's *Odysseus* portrayed him as a 'Wily Odysseus' has been much commented on he's noted as a persuasive liar and disguise artist a man who lives by his wits, who devise stratagems and tricks, and who is sometimes too clever for his good. Odysseus returns to his home kingdom of Ithaca following an absence of twenty years.

Odysseus is said to have spent half of the years fighting the Trojan War and the other half wandering around the Aegean Sea, trying to get home, enduring hardships, and conquering. But Atwood reflects the rare characteristics of Odysseus in *The Penelopiad*. He was first obsessed with Helen of Troy but then he loved Penelope he share his thoughts with her and Homer conveyed him as strong and brave but he did not mention the softest character of Odysseus.

Atwood does an extensive study on the subject of Odysseus and brings up *The Penelopiad's* depiction of Odysseus in another way. In Vyasar's Mahabharata Karna was found and raised by a charioteer, Adhiratha, and his wife Radha, who raised him as their son. He had been married to Vrushali for many years. When Duryodhana loses a game to Arjuna in Hastinapur. Karna appeared to help Duryodhana they become friends Karna become king of Anga. He was known for his valor, generosity, and tragic fate.

He became known for his skills as a warrior, but he was also deeply loyal to a friend, Duryodhana. In contrast to the original Mahabharata, Kane's Karna emphasizes the inner conflicts and tribulations of the character. He was adored by his family, wife, and kids since he was the most pleasant and nice person to everyone. Karna and Odysseus are both portrayed as flawed yet admirable people. They are depicted with actual human qualities rather than being one-dimensional heroes. Additionally, it is made

clear that both characters have a strong feeling of devotion towards their friends and allies. Karna is faithful to his buddy Duryodhana, but Odysseus is fiercely loyal to his wife Penelope and his associates.

On their voyage, both characters encounter difficulties and stumbling blocks. After the Trojan War, Odysseus strives to go home and encounters numerous obstacles. Karna, on the other hand, experiences prejudice and suffering as a result of his poor birth and outsider position. The characters of Odysseus in Margaret Atwood's *The Penelopiad* and Karna in Kavita Kane's *Karna's Wife* are significantly distinct and come from various literary and cultural traditions. Some fascinating contrasts can be drawn between the two, though. Both characters have their shortcomings and limitations; nobody is entirely good or wicked.

Male characters are handled differently by Atwood and Kane. Other female writers, in my opinion, emphasize feminism in their writing, yet they eloquently capture the nurturing personalities of the bravest heroes in mythology. Odysseus was fixated on Helen, but after marrying Penelope, whom he treated like a friend and with whom he shares things, he became so melancholy and yearned to share these things with her.

Nothing in mythology refers to the compassionate nature of the Odyssey. He yearns to show Penelope his unadulterated love with this art. Odysseus is portrayed in this novel as the most devout family guy; even if he occasionally did not respond to her ideas, he genuinely loved her soul. Male characters are handled differently by Atwood and Kane. Other female writers, in my opinion, emphasize feminism in their writing, yet they eloquently capture the nurturing personalities of the bravest heroes in mythology. Odysseus was fixated on Helen, but after marrying Penelope, whom he treated like a

friend and with whom he shares things, he became so melancholy and yearned to share these things with her.

Nothing in mythology refers to the compassionate nature of Odysseus. He yearns to show Penelope his unadulterated love with this art. Odysseus is portrayed in this novel as the most devout family guy; even if he occasionally did not respond to her ideas, he genuinely loved her soul. By bringing value to individuals, both Karna and Odysseus genuinely benefit society. Odysseus struggled to find his family as a result of the Trojan War; due to his plot twist, the Greeks were the only ones to triumph, yet his desire and emotions were intense.

Because of Karna alone, the Dharma was upheld in the Mahabharata, making Karna the most significant individual in Kurukshetra. Even in his final moments, he continued to uphold moral principles and the Dharma. They were both real warriors in their mythologies. The reworked works accord them the greatest honor and respect; everyone recognizes their bravery and ability, but nobody is aware of their feelings, emotional breakdowns, or shame. In these works, Atwood and Kane conveyed their feelings and loved characters.

They both, in my opinion, did not take into account the masculine dominance in their families; instead, they respected each other and everyone else. Their kind and wonderful qualities undoubtedly changed the stereotyped culture and this writing offers everyone a fresh start.

Homer's epic poems, the *Iliad*, and the *Odyssey*, are set during the Trojan War, a mythical conflict between the Greeks and the Trojans. The story of the Trojan War revolves around the abduction of Helen, the wife of Menelaus, king of Sparta, by Paris, a

prince of Troy. She is depicted as a beautiful and desirable woman. Who is torn between her loyalty to her husband and her love for Paris She is also portrayed as a sympathetic and tragic figure in mythology. In Greek mythology, Helen was considered the most attractive lady. Helen hears a story and rude traits from each author. Her demeanor in The Penelopiad was similarly represented by Atwood as being obnoxious and harsh.

Nobody in legend ever speaks about the affection that Odysseus and Helen of Troy had. Odysseus had fallen head over heels for Helen before he married Penelopiad. Regarding Helen, he felt a variety of emotions. Helen, according to Atwood, is Zeus' daughter and has always been hostile to Penelopiad. Since Helen has only experienced Odysseus apart from her, Penelope truly curses her life. She finally regretted her poor life choices though. In her portrayal by Atwood, she was a very alluring lady to men.

Mercules, the husband of Helen, sincerely loved her, but Helen had fallen in love with Paris, the Prince of Troy. When they fled to Troy, the Trojan War broke out. Helen of Troy was presented in this reworked work as a seductive lady who disregarded all morals and social conventions. From my perspective, Helen was respecting her ideas and sentiments that no one could fully comprehend.

She became the most elegant person in front of everyone due to the obsession everyone had with her and her traits. She was pleased with everyone after realizing how horrible her character was, and she requests Penelopiad to apologize for ruining her life and treating her disrespectfully. The Mahabharata describes Draupadi as an enchanting and wise princess who emerges from a sacrifice fire. The five Pandava brothers, who earned their hand in marriage in a competition, are her husbands. Draupadi plays a significant part in the events that take place before the great battle of Kurukshetra,

becoming a representation of the Pandava's power and togetherness. In the Mahabharata, Draupadi is a complicated and multifaceted figure. She comes across as fiercely independent, brave, vulnerable, and sympathetic.

One of the most significant events in Draupadi's story is the incident in which she is humiliated in front of the entire court by the Kauravas, who attempt to disrobe her during a game of dice. This event leads to a deep enmity between Draupadi and the Kauravas and sets the stage for the great war of Kurukshetra. Her story continues to be an inspiration to many and has been interpreted and reimagined in various forms of art and literature.

Because of Draupadi's bravery and strong will, most women in Mahabharata conform to stereotypes because they admire her for standing up for Dharma and opposing Adharma while being mocked for it. Kane attempted to capture this in her work. Kane discusses the romance between Karna and Draupadi in this work. She cares for him, yet she treated him poorly in her svayamvara, which Karna perceived as retaliation. Karna refers to her as a prostitute as they are playing dice, and Dushasana begins to unveil her sari as a result. But Draupadi was so naturally accepting of her plight that Kurukshetra had her teach dharma to everyone. Karna knows she had her love. But Insultation caused him to treat her in this way.

Following this, Uruvi visits Draupadi to offer her husband's apologies in place of Karna's, but Draupadi has already forgiven Karna since she is aware of the offense she committed against him in Svayamvara, thus she sees this as a punishment. Draupadi did not view this as a major issue because she was really in love with Karna. Draupadi, however, questioned why I was punished this way for such a tiny error.

Despite her marriage to Arujna, she still admired Karna. In this book, Draupadi shows us that love is the greatest healer and that we can forgive everything. This aspect of Draupadi, which we were unaware of in any of the mythology, is explained by the reworked work, which also explains the forgiveness and profound love between Karna and Draupadi. Both Draupadi and Helen of Troy are objectified in their unique ways because many men portray them as objects of desire and adoration.

In both texts, this objectification and its effects are discussed. Both characters are shown as autonomous, strong-willed individuals with their agency and goals. Their stories are portrayed as feminist retellings of conventional myths, and they question conventional gender roles and expectations. They are involved in a wider battle that transcends their own unique goals and preferences. The primary conflicts that form their narrative include Helen of Troy's kidnapping by Paris and the ensuing Trojan War, as well as Draupadi's marriage to the Pandavas and her participation in the battle of Kurukshetra.

Both ladies, in my opinion, smashed barriers with their distinctiveness. Although Helen was unpleasant to everyone, she altered the conventional Greek myth, making men dread Helen and her methods. In other words, Draupadi was the most well-known figure on earth. She defies stereotypes and societal standards in India by facing his fate head-on and fighting against cruelty and Adharma's character because of his kind and compassionate nature.

Most women found inspiration in Draupadi, and I like Helen's tenacity when dealing with men. Both of these women have the strongest personalities in their

respective mythologies and are viewed as invincible figures. Their individuals have been regularly revised to reflect changes in modern society.

*The Odyssey*, an epic poem by Homer, features a character named Eurycleia. She is said to be a smart and competent nursemaid and is a devoted and valued servant of Odysseus and his family. The character of Eurycleia is that of a sage and learned woman who aids Odysseus on his quest. She is the first to understand his actual nature when he disguises himself and returns to Ithaca. In addition, Eurycleia is in charge of maintaining the home and taking care of Telemachus and Penelope, Odysseus' wife.

She is shown as a dependable and valued family member. Atwood explores her character's inner thoughts and feelings to give a more realistic representation of her. It is made clear that Eurycleia is a compassionate individual who comprehends the struggles endured by Penelope, her mistress, and the other female members of the household. In addition, she is shown to be a perceptive observer of human nature who can see through the phony bravado of her potential husband Penelope. Eurycleia, a character in Atwood's *Eurycleia*, is similarly plagued by remorse over the murder of the suitors, which she assisted in carrying out.

She is seen to be deeply confused about her part in the carnage and to be having trouble accepting the idea that she helped execute guys who had formerly been house guests. The *Penelopiad* portrays Eurycleia as a rich and multi-dimensional woman with her aspirations, trepidations, and regrets. The portrayal of conflict and violence by Atwood emphasizes the crucial role that household servants play as well as the toll that it may have on people who are not directly involved in the battle.

She is the mother of the five Pandava brothers. Kunti is the wife of King Pandu, who is unable to have children due to a curse, and thus she uses a boon from the sage Durvasa to bear children through the gods. Kunti is described as a beautiful and virtuous woman, who is devoted to her husband and children. She is also portrayed as intelligent and wise and is respected for her knowledge and guidance.

Kunti is a central character in the Hindu epic, *The Mahabharata*. She is presented as a complicated character with both positive and negative attributes in the play *Karna's Wife*. Kunti is seen from a new angle in the novel, which explores her feelings, experiences, and ideas that are not fully represented in the original *Mahabharata*. Additionally, Kunti is shown as a lady who battles the effects of her previous transgressions on her current existence.

The book explores Kunti's connection with Karna, the eldest child she had given up for adoption. Kunti struggles with choosing between her devotion to her husband and other boys and her love for Karna. She is also seen to be very sorry for the decisions she had made in the past and how they had affected Karna's life. Similar traits are shared by Eurycleia and Kunti in their respective mythologies. Odysseus is nursed by Eurycleia, and he cares for Penelopiad and her child. Since there is no novel describing the relationship between Uruvi and Kunti, she was regarded as having a caring personality who acts without expecting anything in return.

On the other hand, Eurycleia also looks after Penelopiad as her daughter. And they are portrayed in this piece as the epitome of maternal love. Both of them yearn to become mothers. In Odysseus and Penelope's lives, Eurycleia was represented by Atwood as being the kindest person.

Since she was young she has only cared for Odysseus. When he left for the Trojan War, she yearned to see him and now that he is gone, she is left with a void in her heart. On the other side, Kunti left her first child, Karna, behind, but in this novel, Kane mostly concentrates on their bond. Kunti admired Karna and longed for her son's affection and love. And they are both presented as powerful characters in this work. Nobody talks about Kunti and Eurycleia from this standpoint, but these authors offer these maternal characters a fresh look.

They are both presented in this rewritten work as strong, courageous women who can manage their families no matter what the circumstances are and who are proficient at handling difficult ones. Through this character's pure love and devotion to their family and their son, modern society acquires certain principles. It denotes the mythological representation of current motherly love. No work concentrates on this tiny figure that Atwood and Kane most masterfully reproduce in contemporary myth. Yet they offer a fresh viewpoint on them.

Menelaus is a pivotal figure in Homer's *Odyssey*, and he has a big impact on the plot. He is Helen of Troy's husband, whose kidnapping by Paris led to the Trojan War. Menelaus had a significant role in the events that led to the demise of the suitors fighting for the hand of his wife's cousin Penelope when he and Helen returned to Sparta after the battle. Menelaus is shown to be a valiant and honorable warrior who is devoted to his friends and family.

Menelaus is a minor figure in *The Penelopiad* and is only briefly referenced in Homer's *Odyssey*. Helen of Troy, the reason for the Trojan War, is married to Menelaus.

Menelaus is only briefly mentioned in the novel by Penelope, who refers to him as "The cuckolded Menelaus." the fact that his wife Helen fled with Paris of Troy.

Even though he was a minor character in the text, Atwood presents multiple perspectives on him. Other authors published Menelaus was exclusively fixated on Helen's beauty; when they were married, they jointly controlled Sparta, but in this story, Menelaus was madly in love with Helen. So, He desires Helen to return to his home. One of the main figures in the Hindu epic *Mahabharata* is Arjuna. He is the third child of Hastinapura's monarch Pandu and his wife Kunti. Arjuna is one of the Pandavas, the primary characters of the epic, together with his four brothers Yudhishtira, Bhima, Nakula, and Sahadeva. One of the greatest heroes in Indian mythology, Arjuna is renowned for his prowess as a warrior and archer.

He is frequently said to as the deity Krishna's preferred pupil. Kane was fond of Uruvi in this piece and incorporates several aspects of Arujna into Karna's Wife. In this piece, he is presented as a wonderful character. Both Arjuna and Menelaus serve as representations of masculine strength, fervor, and talents in this work. Arjuna was portrayed as a sort of person who wishes to teach dharma to everyone; they are more devoted to their companions.

Arjuna considers Dharma to be the universe's ultimate force. We all agree that he was a nice and skilled person, but we were unaware of his emotional state. He chose not to travel to Kurushektra. However, he agrees to take part in the campaign to spread the dharma. On the other side, Menelaus also symbolizes the male qualities of the Trojan War; Atwood portrays him as the most lovable character in this book. They prevailed in the Trojan War thanks to Menelaus.

He was regarded as the most important character in the revised text. Menelaus and Arjuna both symbolize masculine dominance in contemporary culture, and they provide modern mythology with a fresh viewpoint as the most benevolent characters. They were regarded as accomplished individuals for their time, and later writings on them tended to focus on the emotional breakdowns they had while they lived.

They are renowned for their courage and combat prowess. They are both excellent fighters. They both participate in epic battles and are revered for their fighting ability in the Greek and Mahabharata mythologies. While Menelaus is wed to Helen of Troy, who flees with Paris of Troy and sparks the Trojan War, Arjuna is wed to Draupadi, the spouse of all five Pandava brothers.

In the "*Bhagavad Gita*," Arjuna is presented with a moral choice: battle for his kingdom or forgive his oath as a warrior. On the other hand, when his wife Helen flees with Paris, Menelaus is forced to consider his moral obligations and decide whether to wage war to get her back or to accept her absence. Menelaus and Arjuna are both complicated characters who struggle with issues of morality and obligation. They both play the roles of soldiers and partners. Atwood and Kane indirectly tell them as human warriors. Throughout their perspectives, it represents divine quality to modern mythology.

One of the major figures in the Indian epic *Mahabharata* is Duryodhana. Due to his animosity against the Pandavas, his relatives, and his participation in the Kurukshetra War, Duryodhana is well-known. He was envious of the Pandavas intensely. He was a valiant fighter who possessed a lot of admirable traits, but his vices jealousy, haughtiness, and disrespect for dharma were what brought him to ruin.

Duryodhana is presented as a nuanced and multidimensional figure in "*Karna's Wife*." On the one hand, he is shown as a cunning and manipulative character who would do everything to further his agenda. He has deep-seated envy of the Pandava's riches and influence, and he views Karna as an important partner in his desire for dominance. However, Duryodhana is also shown as a tormented and lonely character who suffers from a profound feeling of insecurity and a persistent fear of betrayal. He is cunning, deceitful, and ambitious, and he also harbours a strong sense of insecurity and dread of betrayal.

*The Odyssey*, Homer's poem, does not include any mention of Theseus. Although Theseus is a well-known character in Greek literature and mythology, his tale is distinct from Odysseus'. On the other side, Theseus is primarily renowned for his valiant actions at Athens, which included destroying the Minotaur and bringing Attica under his control. His tale is presented in several Greek plays and myths, although it is distinct from Odysseus in *The Odyssey*.

In contrast, the mythical Athens king Theseus, as described in *The Penelopiad*, is renowned for his valor and might. He makes a fleeting cameo appearance in the book as one of the several suitors trying to win Penelope over while her husband, Odysseus, is away at war. Theseus is shown as forceful and conceited, sure that he would succeed in winning Penelope's hand in marriage. He finally loses, though, and goes home empty-handed.

Duryodhana is presented in *Karna's Wife* as a vicious and power-hungry guy who would do whatever it takes to accomplish his objectives. Theseus is represented in *The Penelopiad* as a charming but unstable guy who is more concerned with his fame than the

happiness of his wife Penelope. He entices her with promises of excitement and adventure but later leaves her behind to pursue his objectives. Duryodhana's ambition for the throne and envy of his relatives, the Pandavas, serve as his motivations.

Draupadi, the wife of the Pandavas, is humiliated in front of everyone by him because he views her as a prize to be acquired. But finally, Draupadi's tenacity and Karna's devotion to her cost him the battle of Kurukshetra, which brought about his demise. To live, Penelope must utilize her brains and cunning. She is left in charge of running their country and caring for their kid alone. Even if Theseus eventually finds her again, his presence merely serves to act as a reminder of the betrayals and struggles she has gone through.

Theseus and Duryodhana are both revealed to have flaws and are unable to properly appreciate the ladies in their life. They are motivated by their aspirations and goals, and they regard the women in their lives as something to be acquired or lost. But the women in their life are powerful and tenacious, and in the end, they become the protagonists of their tales. Penelope's shrewdness and tenacity and Draupadi's strong spirit demonstrate that women may be potent drivers for change even in patriarchal situations.

In Greek mythology, Hercules is a mythical figure who is a demigod in Roman mythology. He does not appear as a character in Homer's epic poem *The Odyssey*, but he is briefly referenced when Odysseus visits the underworld and encounters him there along with the ghosts of the dead in Book Eleven. He is renowned for his fortitude and bravery, as well as his labors, which have included, among other things, cleaning the Augean stables and slaying a lion.

From Penelope, Odysseus wife, Margaret Atwood retells *The Odyssey* in her novel. Although Heracles doesn't have a big part in the tale, he is said to have a few distinct qualities. Heracles is portrayed as a strong, heroic person who is famed for his bravery and strength. He is claimed to have "biceps like basketballs" and to have beaten the Hydra, the Nemean lion, and other powerful monsters. He is also depicted as being outgoing and pleasant, loving the company of people, and frequently cracking jokes.

Heracles does, however, have a more sinister side in *The Penelopiad*. He is shown to be a womanizer who doesn't care about the emotions of the women he seduces. Penelope describes how Heracles used Melantho, her handmaid, who had fallen in love with him, to further his ends before discarding her. Heracles is also depicted as having a violent side. He once murdered his wife and children in a fit of wrath, as Penelope recalls.

In the Mahabharata, Bhima has an important role, especially during the conflicts between the Pandavas and their adversaries, the Kauravas. He plays a key role in the destruction of several Kaurava soldiers, including Karna and Duryodhana's brother Dushasana. Additionally, Bakasura the evil demon, and Jarasandha the wicked monarch were both killed by Bhima. He is renowned for having greater physical powers than any other person in the epic, according to legend. In addition to being a proficient archer, Bhima is noted for his extraordinary speed and agility.

Although Bhima appears in the book, this version of him differs from the one found in the Mahabharata. In *Karna's Wife*, Bhima is shown as a nuanced and imperfect person. His fury and impulsiveness frequently cause him to make bad choices, even though he is still a capable warrior. Karna, whom Bhima perceives as Uruvi's competition

for her affection and attention, is also shown to be the object of Bhima's resentment.

Bhima is shown to have immense empathy and compassion despite his shortcomings.

In one scenario, he resolves to assist a little girl who is being mistreated by her stepmother out of compassion. Additionally, he is kind to Uruvi, whom he gradually respects and cares about. Compared to how he is portrayed in the Mahabharata, Bhima is shown in *Karna's Wife* as a more multifaceted figure who possesses both good and bad traits. In this rewritten work, Bhima and Hercules are both presented as wicked characters, even though they were both renowned in ancient mythology for their strength and valor. However, in this revised book, Kane and Atwood investigate them and highlight some of their shortcomings. Bhima's jealousy of Karna's strength, wisdom, and experience quickly arose.

Hercules is depicted as a womanizer and seductive character; both of these traits suggest that jealousy and seduction are the worst traits in a person, and modern society learns to be positive and good things through these characters. Occasionally, good characters are portrayed as being negative because these reflect the most well-known character was portrayed badly in just a minute due to their minor errors. Shortly after, lesser characters in mythology gave messages to contemporary society to Atwood and Kane.

This chapter has also explored the gender roles of the major characters in the books *Karna's Wife* and *The Penelopiad* which are based on the Greek and Indian mythologies, the portrayal of their personalities from the authors' point of view has been brought up from the conversation. Firstly, Uruvi as an Indian mythical character has not been brought out into the spotlight.

Kavita Kane has portrayed her character in a mesmerizing way, she was a brave and valuable woman. Both Penelopiad and Uruvi act according to their values which are instinctive to their consciousness and those values are not influenced by societal opinions or what many others would think as perspective. In comparison Penelope and Uruvi lead a remarkable life. They did the things that were only ethical and morally valuable. They both lead their family and kingdom on their own when their better halves were gone their own choices.

They stand by the values of ethics at all costs portraying the women characters in this manner would inspire and attract the people of today's world. They both had faced, numerous struggles by society, mainly because of the reason, that they belonged to a royal background. Whatever happened in their life, they will be highly criticized by the people for all those obstacles themselves. They have come across numerous obsessive and restrictive phases of their life. If they have surpassed all those things, people in today's world can do many incredible things, with the freedom that we have in these current times.

In these books, *Karna's Wife* and *The Penelopiad*, the stereotypical structure of the male personalities have broken down by the authors. The alpha-masculine, energy is still here, but the lovable side of their personality has enhanced, and that should be an appreciable thing. In today's world, muscularity is treated well, the vulnerability should be entertained, if one wants to see the true side of a person. These kinds of portrayed between Karna and Odysseus would help to bring equality among all genders of the society. The heroic perspective of men has influenced men for thousands of years, even in ancient mythologies.

Including, high values and characteristics on them, will lead them to conceal their other deep-down emotions in general, emotions for men and women are undefeatable stereotypical values on men, which is restrictive on their true emotions. For instance, men crying is not considered a manly thing, thus creating low self-esteem. In *Karna's Wife* and *The Penelopiad*, as a modern-writers, Kane and Atwood brought up the realistic emotional values of men. Their deep-down feelings and kindness have portrayed well these works.

Helen of Troy and Draupadi are the two personalities who have gone through a lot of obstacles and miserable situations. Society has thrust their lethal criticisms on them, merely because they followed their own needs and desires. In the case of Draupadi had to marry five Pandavas in the same family. She has not intended to marry them all, but the situation made her do so, after that situation, she didn't try to change her life. But to lead the same despite societal opinions. On the other hand, Helen runs out of her values and betrayed people who believe her only.

For the reason that she loved another man. Even though it is not the merely right thing to do, she did what her heart thing to do, she did what her heart desires again, and the people did not accept her actions, these are two inspiring personalities for the younger generations to overcome any kind of emotional struggles. They are the strongest feminine energy that has ever been portrayed in the mythologies. They have also gone through never-ending obstacles, despite the societal opinions they lead their life according to their values and desires, and the unwanted opinions had not affected their life a bit.

The above-given characters are prominent personalities who have gone through all the lethal phases of life, and their portrayal of them in the rewritten works would make

a change in the new generation and develop their values. It also develops their idealistic values of life. The rewritten works also aid to keep the mythical works alive and new perspectives and values are introduced through these works. These characters have broken up their social boundaries, breaking through the stereotypical values.

In *Karna's Wife* and *The Penelopiad*, both authors give new perspectives, and breaking the boundaries of gender roles it evolved and diversified significantly compared to traditional mythology. It reflects the changing societal attitudes towards gender equality and inclusivity. And they provide a modern lens context and it is a platform to explore timeless themes and create narratives that resonate with the complexities of the modern world these rewritten works of mythological narratives serve as mirrors that reflect the shifting attitudes and values of our time, challenging social norms and offering alternative perspectives. Moreover, modern mythology's exploration of gender roles provides a space for social commentary, addressing contemporary issues such as gender inequality, identity, and the fluidity of gender constructs.

## Chapter IV

### Conclusion

Some personalities do not agree with this concept of rewriting mythical works. These influences should not swallow the creativity of authors, or writers. Rewritten mythologies play a vital role in keeping ancient mythologies alive in modern form. They mold their characters and values of them, according to the present world modifications. Thus, rewritten works should be appreciated and developed. However, it is important to note that there have been some notable individuals in India who have expressed reservations or opposition to the practice of rewriting mythology.

For example, in 2017, the chief priest of the Kashi Vishwanath Temple in Varanasi, India, criticized a fictional retelling of the Ramayana by author Anand Neelakantan, stating that it was "an insult to Lord Rama and the people of India". Similarly, in 2019, some members of the Akhil Bharatiya Kshatriya Mahasabha, a community organization in India, protested against the publication of a book called *Draupadi: The Untold Story* by author Saiswaroopa Iyer, claiming that it distorted the character of Draupadi, a central figure in the Mahabharata.

However, it is important to recognize that these examples represent a minority view and that the vast majority of authors in India support the practice of rewriting mythology as a way to engage with and reinterpret ancient stories and legends for contemporary audiences. One of the main reason why people oppose the rewritten works are, that they fear that the old version of their works will disappear. However, according to me the ancient version of those will be preserved at all costs, and, the idea here is that

humankind is evolving, and the circumstances, values, and desires are different when there are compared to the ancient days. Rewritten works, help to convey the values and virtues it is projected in the old writings, but with a little modification that is apt for today's generation.

People even get to know about the ancient works, by reading through these new forms of writings. The writers of these genres have brought out the hidden characters of mythologies and weaved their characters with high values and forms. Similarly, some traditionalists and nationalists in Greece may express concerns about adaptations or reimagining of Greek myths that they see as departing from traditional interpretations or values. However, it is important to recognize that these examples represent a minority view and that many authors in Greece have engaged with and supported the practice of rewriting mythology as a way to engage with and reinterpret ancient stories and legends for contemporary audiences.

The trend of rewriting mythology has been popular among Greek writers and artists in recent years and has contributed to a richer and more diverse cultural landscape in Greece. In rewritten works of mythology, authors may also introduce hidden or lesser-known characters from the original myths and legends or create entirely new characters that were not present in the traditional stories. Here are some examples of hidden characters in rewritten works of mythology there here have been some notable individuals who have expressed reservations or opposition to the practice of rewriting mythology.

For example, the Greek writer Nikos Kazantzakis, best known for his novel *Zorba the Greek*, was criticized by some for his novel *The Last Temptation of Christ*, which

reimagined the life of Jesus Christ in a way that was considered controversial by some Christians. In rewritten works of mythology, authors may also introduce hidden or lesser-known characters from the original myths and legends or create entirely new characters that were not present in the traditional stories.

Here are some examples of hidden characters in rewritten works of mythology. In traditional myths and legends, many characters are only briefly mentioned or serve as secondary characters to the main protagonists. In rewritten works of mythology, these characters may be fleshed out and given their storylines. For example, in Rick Riordan's "Percy Jackson and the Olympians" series, many minor characters from Greek mythology are given expanded roles, such as Clarisse La Rue, the daughter of Ares. And some characters from traditional myths and legends may have been forgotten or overlooked in modern retellings. In rewritten works of mythology, authors may bring these characters back to the forefront.

For example, in Kamila Shamsie's novel *Home Fire*, the character of Isma is based on the figure of Antigone from Greek mythology, who is often overshadowed by the main characters in the play. In rewritten works of mythology, authors may also create entirely new characters that were not present in the original myths and legends. These characters may serve as foils to the main protagonists or provide new perspectives on the story. For example, in Joanne Harris's novel *The Gospel of Loki*, the character of Loki's wife Sigyn is a new character created for the book, who serves as a counterpoint to Loki's chaotic nature.

Modern-day characters, in some rewritten works of mythology, authors may introduce modern-day characters into the story. For example, in Roshani Chokshi's novel

*Aru Shah and the End of Time*, the main character is a Twelve-year-old girl who discovers that she is the reincarnation of a Hindu princess. Overall, hidden characters in rewritten works of mythology provide authors with the opportunity to expand upon the original stories and create new and interesting narratives that offer fresh perspectives on ancient myths and legends.

Another possibility to spread our culture and values is by exposing the rewritten works. Diasporic writers of re-written mythologies can help achieve the results of this process. People from other nations will read the work they might get inspired by the values of the characteristics, and these works might pave the way for the great expose of ancient writings. These are perks of rewritten works, and people opposing there with superficial reasons should be enlightened by the amazing possibilities that these works can bring.

Salman Rushdie is born in India, Rushdie has written several novels that incorporate elements of Indian mythology, such as *Midnight's Children*, which draws on the story of the Hindu god Brahma and the myth of the creation of the universe. Neil Gaiman is born in the United Kingdom, Gaiman has written several novels and graphic novels that draw on various mythologies, such as "American Gods," which incorporates elements of Norse, Egyptian, and African mythology.

Nalo Hopkinson is born in Jamaica and now living in Canada, Hopkinson has written several novels that incorporate elements of Caribbean folklore and mythology, such as *"Brown Girl in the Ring,"* which draws on the story of the Jamaican folk hero Anansi. Helen Oyeyemi is born in Nigeria and raised in the United Kingdom, Oyeyemi has written several novels that incorporate elements of African folklore and mythology,

such as "*Mr. Fox*," which draws on the story of the trickster figure of the same name from European and African mythology.

Overall, diasporic writers of rewritten mythical works offer unique perspectives on ancient myths and legends, blending their own cultural experiences and influences with the rich traditions of their native cultures to create new and innovative narratives. In some cases, entire myths may be rewritten to explore gender roles and their impact on society. For instance, the Greek myth of Orpheus and Eurydice has been rewritten with a feminist twist, where Eurydice is given agency and autonomy instead of being a passive object of Orpheus desire.

Overall, rewritten mythology provides an opportunity to explore and challenge traditional gender roles and to create more diverse and inclusive representations of gender in literature and media. Authors of Rewritten mythologies, can modify their work according to the present state of society any incident could be fantasied, and a real event can be intertwined in the works of mythology. While doing so, that certain work holds a value or justice to it. Thus, brings out the seating factor in readers.

For instance, popular unjustifying incidents can be said in a mythical way with convincing values and ensure, in the end, that provoke good values and feelings in readers' minds. Society as a whole benefit immeasurably from a climate in which all persons, regardless of race or gender, may have the opportunity to learn respect, responsibility, advancement, and remuneration based on ability. In ancient mythologies, male domination was abundant and it was flourishing in the old writing, however, in modern writing, authors have given equal power and emotions to both genders in their writing the stereotypical portrayal of male characters has broken down by these writers.

The true side of the male kind has revealed in contemporary works. And, also they have normalized the fact that emotions are equal to all beings, despite their genders. The equality in emotions and the ability to express them, without considering other people's opinions is the real freedom. This context has been populated by modern writers. This is a needed factor to reiterate in every person's life. This projection of characters has been changing the norms of society, which was typically the stereotypical factors of gender roles.

The portrayal of these revolutionary characters has inspired young people. In ancient myths, the characters are mostly stereotypical. In modern writing, people have inspiration from the works that they read. Modern writing has brought up generous and powerful characters who lead their characters on their values, they did not compromise with the opinions of society. It gives power to this generation of people to act according to their instinct in the right way.

Back then, having feelings for somebody, cannot be expressed freely, a lot of somebody, cannot be expressed freely a lot of social values and norms would come into consideration of their love life. Often those feelings have been neglected, but nowadays these perspectives have changed despite their gender values people have been expressing their mutual feelings. Freedom of choice has tremendously increased in these generations, and these things have elevated in the modern writings of mythology.

Another prominent point is that, despite the prominent point is that, despite of personalities and various dimensions of their personalities have been said convincingly. Even the pessimistic characters had their phase of positivity in their lives. It holds a huge value, in terms of analyzing their dark side. Modern writing has given importance to all

phases and emotions of human life. It helps to understand that all people have the bad and good aspects of their lives. It is normal and every emotion of humankind should be valued.

These perspectives have also been normalized among modern people. Modern mythology often reimagines or reinterprets traditional negative characters to portray them in a more positive light. Here are a few examples In Norse mythology, Loki is often depicted as a trickster and troublemaker. However, in Marvel Comics and the Marvel Cinematic Universe, Loki has become a fan-favorite antihero.

He's portrayed as complex and sympathetic, with his mischievousness often used for good. On the other side in *The Ramayana*, Shurpanakha is a demoness who tries to seduce Lord Rama and is ultimately punished by having her nose cut off. In recent retellings, she has been portrayed as a feminist icon who stands up against patriarchal oppression. For example, in the novel *The Liberation of Sita* by Volga, Shurpanakha is portrayed as a strong and independent woman who refuses to be silenced.

The other famous one is the classic fairytale *Sleeping Beauty*, Maleficent is an evil fairy who curses Princess Aurora to die on her sixteenth birthday. However, in the Disney movie *Maleficent*, she is portrayed as a sympathetic character with a tragic backstory. Her actions are driven by a desire for revenge against the humans who wronged her, rather than a desire for pure evil.

These are just a few examples of negative characters being reimagined in a more positive light in modern Indian mythology. There are many more instances of characters being given a more nuanced portrayal that reflects the complexity of human nature. These characters and their portrayal in modern writing resemble the above-said points.

Modern writers have talked about the reasoning effect for the happening events the emotional values have exposed, in old writings, the values, and emotional concepts have not been brought up to the understanding of common people. Hence, most of modern writers have been carrying out these forms of writing, which are helpful for these forms of writings, which are helpful for the readers of this generation.

The writers have crafted their works in a way that is more applicable and understandable for today's readers. It expresses their in-depth understanding of social values and the evolving phase of the human race. These works should be appreciated as they are contributing to the evolution of human values and emotions. The main focus of this paper is to analyze the need for redefining gender roles in modern mythologies. It does have a huge optimistic effect on human development.

It crafts a value system and provides inspiring personalities to learn from them. Molded stories of re-written works reflect the incredible understanding of the writers on society and the evolving world. "We've begun to raise daughters more like sons... but few dare to raise our sons more like our daughters." (Steinema, 69) They even help to hold up the traditional values and valuable emotional factors of human life. Hence, appreciating the rewritten works should be exposed and produced at all costs.

Civilization has been evolving for thousands of years along with it, human practicality has also been evolving the mind is equipped with instincts that enable our ancestors to survive and reproduce. These instincts are closely connected with environmental factors, needs, and particular desires thus, our lifestyle and cultural structure shaped the lives of men and women.

These factors called culture and religious values have been followed since ancient times. In this changing and progressing world, the restriction to follow the old values and the set examples of mythological characters will not place any importance on the development of human society. As time goes people's desires do change, and their instinct would act according to their environmental influence and the expression, they had throughout their life.

Hence, following the mythical characters and their old fantasied life will not help to cope with today's situations re-written works have been changing the imaginable or impractical values of those characters. Following the narrative of those impeccable personalities, the writers are applying them to the reality of today's world. It will inspire and relate to the readers of this society more than the ancient writings. As we all know, the old version of the writings will be read and preserved. However, it is no longer applicable to today's world. The writings of the mythical genre should evolve along with the evolution of human beings.

Gender roles in modern mythology hold significant importance as they contribute to a more nuanced, inclusive, and reflective narrative tradition. By embracing diverse gender identities and challenging traditional stereotypes, modern mythology becomes a powerful catalyst for positive change in our understanding of gender and its impact on individuals and society as a whole.

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