Myths in Humanities

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Abstract— In the present paper titled 'Myths in Humanities' I have endeavoured to trace the significance and evolution of the study of myths across the disciplines- Anthropology, Psychology and Literature .The particular emphasis is on treating myth as narratives and analyse the presence and contemporary relevance of religious and cultural themes, symbols and language especially in relation to present literary discourse.I shall use the narrative of the 'cave of sleepers' from various sources with an emphasis on the themes and significance given to different themes in various cultural-religious contexts, thereby revealing the socio-political facts of the past societies and compare it with the present cultural and literal themes to explore how myths reveal the working and progress of human mind and society.

Keywords— Myths; Rituals; Culture; Archetypes.

I. INTRODUCTION

Myths have been intriguing scholars from various disciplines for years. They have been recorded and presented as history, philosophical ideas and ethics; they have been used to trace patterns for interpreting language, psychology and social structures. However, what has puzzled scholars for centuries is to find a specific definition for this word. Aleksander Boskovic(1995 in his paper "Anthropological Perspectives on Myth" has made an effort to trace the antiquity of this struggle:

'The English word myth (as well as the Portuguese and Spanish mito, French mythe, etc.) comes from the old Greek muthos ([μύθος, which has been associated with a variety of meanings and different concepts since the antiquity.6 According to Hofmann (Etymologisches Wõrterbuch Des Griechischen, München, 1949; quoted in Popovic, 1987: 7), this word originated from the Indo-European root *mau/mou and it is closely related to the Lithuanian mausti ("to long for something," "to wish something") and the Serbo-Croatian and Slovenian misao ("thought"). According to another theory (Chantraine, 1968-1980, Vol. 3: 718-719), it is derived from the old Greek onomatopoeic mu (μυ), seen, for example, in the verb mudzo - "to murmur," "to complain." It is widely recognized today that the distinction …despite the fact that our modem (everyday) usage could be dated to the distinction made by the Ionian philosophers from the 6th century BCE. The word …is recorded for the first time in Homer's Iliad and Odyssey (ca. 750-650 BCE), where it has a variety of meanings, although the main meaning seems to be "word" or "speech." However, in the Odyssey it also means "a public speech," "excuse," "conversation," "fact," "threat," "reason," and "story" or "tale." This last meaning leaves open the question of whether it is a true or fictional story (Popovic, 1987: 7). The meanings from the Iliad include "order,"7 "task," "advice" and "intention" or "plan." Other Greek writers also used …for "saying" (Aeschylus, Choephori 314), "hearsay" (Sophocles, Aiax 226), or "report" or "message" (Sophocles, Trachiniae 67). After the beginning of Ionian philosophy in the 6th century BCE, (iuaoÇ was used to denote a "fictitious story," something that has been made up (Pindar, 01. I, 29; Plato, Phaedo 61b), or a "legend" (Herodotus, Historice II, 45). It is this set of meanings that comes close to the modem (at least dictionary) translations of the word "myth".'(p.105)

It was during the age of reason in ancient Greece when the distinction between "real" and "myth" emerged. However, Plato still used the word 'myths' to explain his philosophical ideas e.g. the allegory of cave in the seventh book of his *Republic*.Paul Veyne, a scholar of ancient Greek studies analysed the contemporary treatment of myths and further defined myth according on the basis of that analysis, quoted by Boskovic(1995):

> 'Myth is information. There are informed people who have alighted, not on a revelation, but simply on some vague information they have chanced upon. If they are poets, it will be the Muses, their appointed informants, who will tell them what is known and said. For all that, myth is not a revelation from above, nor is it arcane knowledge. The muse only repeats to them what is known - which, like a natural resource, is available to all who seek it.'(p.109)

This was the kind of perception about myths till the Middle Ages. It was then in 20th century that a formidable revival in the study of myths in Humanities.

The word "myth" became established in English language due to the efforts of Max Muller, the scholar who gave the first rational analysis of myth. He defined myth as a "disease of language" (Boskovic 1995 p. 110). Boskovic(1995) further comments:

> 'Mythology (which for him meant both the body of myths and a "scientific" attempt to explain them) was a product of the primordial sense of awe in the face of the forces and phenomena of nature. "Mythology is inevitable," wrote Müller, "it isnatural, it is an inherent necessity of language, if we recognize in language the outward form and manifestation of thought; it is in fact the dark shadow which language throws upon thought, and which can never disappear till language becomes entirely commensurate with thought, which it never will' (p.112)

Thus, myth came to be defined as an aspect or a part of the language itself.Though criticized for its naivety, Muller's theory did establish a relationship between linguistic and study of myths.

The philosophical perspective on myth was provided by Ernst Cassirer in his *Philosophy of Symbolic Forms* (1953-57). He observed that myth is one of the stages of what he calls humanization .Mythic form of thinking is on a lower level than philosophical or scientific thinking but it constitutes within the kernels of these next stages.

The psychological approach is well culminated in Joseph Campbell's theory in his work *The Mask of God* (1959)

wherein he maintains that there are four functions of mythology with the last one being that myths play a role in introducing an individual to the reality of his own psyche. This was influenced by Carl Jung's theory of archetypes as the psychic structures that lie in an individual's unconscious and play a role in the realization of the Self.

The methodologies especially enumerated by Carl Jung deeply influenced the archetypal literary criticism practised by Northrop Frye and Maud Bodkin. They were also influenced by linguistic and anthropological structuralism particularly by Claude Levi Strauss. This revival in the study of mythical themes and patterns is interesting to observe and find the ways in which in the post-modernist era it can be expanded to open new horizons of studying various aspects of culture and the relationship between literature and socio-cultural beliefs.

II.   MYTH AND ANTHROPOLOGY

The study of myth within the field of Anthropology has been said to have picked up a genuine boost with 'Myth and Custom school', begun by William Robertson Smith. Aleksander Boskovic in his paper notes the confinements of this approach and at the same time investigating the conceivable outcomes of extending the methodology of considering myth within the field of human studies.He begins with the hypothesis of William Robertson Smith who was a Scottish anthropologist known for his inquiry on myths and rituals. Smith has impacted an era of anthropologists. His thoughts have too found a way into the hypotheses of Ernst Cassirer and Susanne K. Langer. Smith was graduate from the University of Aberdeen and then New College in Edinburgh. At New College Smith came under the influence of A.B Davidson, who pushed him into Semitic studies.

Smith was also influenced by the school of "higher criticism" of Old Testament. Higher criticism is a scholarly approach to the Bible including comparative, linguistic and historical approaches. This influence is visible in his lecture series published as *The Old Testament in the Jewish Church*. Another series of lectures was given the following winter, and they were published in 1882 as *The Prophets of Israel and Their Place in History to the Close of the Eighth Century B.C.* He also became editor-in –chief of the ninth edition of *Encyclopaedia Britannica*.It was during this period he met James Frazer and asked him to publish articles on "totem" and "taboo" for the encyclopaedia.

An important lecture series at the given by Smith at the University of Aberdeen in 1887 can be used to sum up his views. He worked to analyse the relationship of religions of the Semitic people to other ancient religions and also to

the religion of the Old Testament and Christianity. His approach to the Eastern religion like Islam was a prejudiced (noted by Boskovic) yet his contribution to the methodology of religion, myth and ritual should be acknowledged.

Smith advocated the comparative method based on the concept of "survivals" popularized by Tylor. "These "survivals" were traits of the ancient beliefs and social customs that have been preserved in the contemporary societies, even though their original function and meaning were lost". Tylor used analysis of survivals to explore both the original concept and the indicators to the future development. Smith in his approach emphasized the social component in the study of religion as quoted by Boskovic (1995):

> 'We are so accustomed to think of religion as a thing between individual men and God that we can hardly enter into the idea of a religion in which a whole nation in its national organisation appears as the religious unit, - in which we have to deal not with the faith and obedience of individual persons, but with the faith and obedience of a nation as expressed in the functions of national life'(119)

In his analysis of the relationship between myth and ritual, Smith asserts that rituals precede myths and that rituals should form the foundation of the any work on primitive religion. He stressed that the best way to study religion is in its primitive form for e.g. he explored the customs of the Bedouin pastoralists for his analysis of Semitic people as noted in his book *Kinship and Marriage* (1889).This emphasis on the social component of religion led him conclude that rituals precedes myths, quotes Boskovic(1995):

> "In all the antique religions, mythology takes the place of dogma; that is, the sacred lore of priests and people, so far as it does not consist of mere rules for the performance of religious acts, assumes the form of stories about gods; and these stories afford the only explanation that is offered of the precepts of religion and the prescribed rules of ritual. But, strictly speaking, this mythology was no essential part of ancient religion, for it had no sacred sanction and no binding force on the worshippers. The myths connected with individual sanctuaries and ceremonies were merely part of the apparatus of the worship; they served to excite the fancy and sustain the interest of the worshipper; but he was often offered a choice of the several accounts of the same thing, and, provided that he fulfilled the ritual with accuracy, no one cared what he believed about its

origin. Belief in a certain series of myths was neither obligatory as a part of the true religion, nor was it supposed that, by believing, a man acquired religious merit and conciliated the favour of the gods. What was obligatory or meritorious was the exact performance of certain acts prescribed by religious tradition. This being so, it follows that mythology ought not to take the prominent place that is too often assigned to it in the scientific study of ancient faiths. So far as the myths consist of explanation of ritual, their value is altogether secondary, and it may be affirmed with confidence that in almost every case the myth was derived from the ritual and not the ritual from the myth; for the ritual was fixed and the myth was variable, the ritual was obligatory and faith in the myth was at the discretion of the worshipper."(p.120)

Stanley A.Cook in his commentary on Smith's theory emphasizes how myths play a secondary role in the religions of Judaism, Christianity and Islam. He gives a distinction between primary and secondary types of myths. Primary myths are connected with the system of beliefs and the specific world-view. They are more connected with actions. On the other hand, secondary myths are explanations for the lost traditions, possibly reworked and purified into more acceptable stories.

To conclude, in spite of the fact that Smith is respected as the primary researcher to ponder the relationship between myths and customs however his accentuation upon custom has been rejected by most of the researchers. However, his theory led to a focus on the social functions of societies and cultures and in the process myths are being given importance as they inform the anthropologists about the "the social organizations, kinship and customs etc." (Boskovic 1995 p.2)

Another important anthropologist who has been credited to arouse an interest in the study of myths in the 20th century is James G. Frazer best known for his book *The Golden Bough* described by Robert Fraser as: 'A classic study of the beliefs and institutions of mankind and the progress through magic, religion and scientific thought'.(1994 p.2)

Now, in order to understand Frazer's methodology for collecting data for his book it is of relevance to know about his personal background as well. James George Frazer was born in Glasgow, Scotland. His father was pharmacist and his mother Katherine nee Bogle was someone who was really interested in drawing family history. Bogle is a known name in Caribbean historical accounts which was frequently discussed in Frazer's

household. Thus, rumours of distant lands and times influenced his childhood. His family followed the Free Church of Scotland really strictly. James Frazer along with a knowledge of religion mastered Greek and Latin which gave him access to a wide range of classical sources. Frazer went to Cambridge and became a residential fellow for many years delving deep in his books.

Robert Fraser in his Introduction to *The Golden Bough* notes:

> 'He knew that rules are founded on rituals which in turn enshrine magical beliefs. Rules are held to be sacrosanct…because the beliefs they embody are essential to society's conception of man, the man and his place within it…All actions are based on calculations, are therefore acts of faith'.(1994 p.4)

Frazer's passion to analyse people's beliefs and conventions grew stronger when he came across Edward Tylor's *Primitive Culture*. He was further influenced by his meeting with William Robertson Smith (already mentioned). Therefore,Frazer envisioned to create a single account that constitutes the whole of man's early culture and beliefs "in the form of narration". Therefore, he needed two things: First, "a wide framework for reference" and second "a nexus on which to hang it" (Fraser 1994 p.22). Hence, he amplified his search of reference by sending out questionnaires to workers in the field asking them about marriage, customs and other related stuff.

For nexus, Frazer observed how the custom of the king defending his throne every twelve years is very similar to the Arician rite. Thus, Frazer found that he could pile up his research on the basis according to which early societies organized their affairs and a philosophy of life. His theory thereby applies to both Malabar and ancient Rome- their intellectual principle being the same.

The plot of Frazer's book has two levels. First is the analysis of ritual of Nemi (the defence ritual) and second is an exploration into the pattern of beliefs that can be observed in many cultures through history. Robert Fraser in his introduction to The *Golden Bough* notes:

> 'Frazer scoured the history for examples of kings who were obliged to relinquish their authority at the end of a fixed term or else to defend their power in some kind of trial of strength. An example of the latter was the priest of Nemi …obliged to defend his power against all the comers. But he had other examples; some of them …came from India or Africa. Sometimes, it seemed to Frazer, the king went quietly; at other times he was…reluctant and forced others to die in his stead in a kind of surrogate sacrifice. Sometimes (and this is where uncomfortable parallels with Christianity came in),

the substitute was the king's son…(as Christ, it seemed to Frazer was a scapegoat)'(1994 p.22)

These rituals, observed Frazer as time moves were entirely forgotten by people and was performed as an empty ritual with men and women playing sacrificial gods and goddesses. Frazer call this movement from age of Magic to that of Religion. Later the ritual "degenerated into a series of …mumming plays, the folklore of the modern or industrial age." (Fraser 1994 p. 22).At the base of this is simply the desire to control the forces of nature and "ensuring that life force moves from ruler to ruler, generation to generation" (Fraser 1994 p 22) –thus rituals collected from different places have the same intellectual principle. Another point that Frazer observes is how magic and myth precipitates into religion and finally into scientific understanding. Frazer's argument regarding magical foundation of Christian rituals is interesting to observe especially in the context of the time it was written.

One of Frazer's basic tenets is association of ideas derived from the ideas of David Hartley. The ideas are associated in three ways-by contiguity, by resemblance or by cause and effect. Magic defines Frazer is either contagious or homeopathic. This division is very similar to the division used by Roman Jakobson study of language wherein he divides the function of language into-metonymy (contiguity) and metaphor (resemblance).

To conclude, for Frazer the key to understanding "man" the main subject of anthropology lies in the comparative method as for him "anthropology is the study of thought… the stages through which the thinking process has passed"(Fraser 1994 p. 30)

Bronislaw Malinowski, was the founder of the school of functionalism. Functionalism was an early 20th century school of thought that defined society "as a system whose parts work together to promote solidarity and stability" (Bhatt 2020 p 3).The emphasis is on the function played by different aspects of the culture.

Malinowski's functionalism shifted the focus from historical to the study of social institutions in the present society. This led to rise of field work as an important part of social anthropology. Malinowski played a major role as an ethnographer observing the social life of Trobiant islanders .He asserts that all customs are inter-related and that customs are developed to fulfil universal biological needs. Malinowski tabulates set of seven biological needs and their respective cultural responses in the following way:

"Basic Needs	Cultural Responses
Metabolism	Commissary
Reproduction	Kinship

Comfort   Shelter

Safety   Protection

Movement   Activities

Growth   Training

Health   Hygiene"

(Bhatt 2020 p. 06)

Therefore, myths represent the "pragmatic charter", in other words, they define the rules that lead the social functions to flourish. They are used to justify the sanctity, antiquity and reality of the social customs. In contrast to fairy tales and legends that are told for entertainment, myths as asserted by Malinowski are "reality lived", a myth is a "narrative resurrection of a primeval reality."(Bhatt2020 p. 09)

> 'Structuralism represents a movement that began in the 1950' and 1960's in France. Emile Durkheim, a French anthropologist, generated the idea that human thought precedes observation and social and cultural phenomena derive from universal human cognition. Claude Levi-Strauss, consider the founder of Structuralism, expanded upon Durkheim's basic concepts to generate the main ideas behind Structuralism. In his definition, there are 3 fundamental properties of the human mind: people follow rules, reciprocity is the simplest way to create social relationships, and a gift binds both the giver and recipient in a continuing social relationship. Such social structures, according to Levi-Strauss, mirrors cognitive structures, the way in which mankind thinks and understands. Structuralism is the approach which seeks to isolate, and decode, deep structures of meaning, organised through systems of signs inherent in human behaviour (language, ritual, dress and so on).'(Bhatt 2020 p.09)

Strauss's work enumerates that cultural life is inexplicable and that the myths within each culture should be studied for the role they play but as a signifying system, thus Strauss draws a lot of his inspiration from Swiss linguist and structuralist Ferdinand de Saussure. The notion of focusing on the way elements of a system combine together rather than on their intrinsic value is the basic principle of structuralism. "Levi-Strauss presented the idea of binary oppositions. This concept coordinates certain ways of thinking. Examples of binary systems studied could be: "life vs. death," "culture vs. nature," or "self vs. other. Each individual concept has an opposite concept that it is co- dependent on. This is known as unity of opposites; no one of these ideas can exist without the other. Every community takes these concepts and makes them specific to their individual culture. Presenting universal ideas and oppositions, and uniting them under a unique, cultural stand-point, eventually forming a structured and organized society. These ideas relate to linguistic anthropology, in that all humans have a common base for which can create complex sounds and develop different languages. Taking the idea of "phonemes, 'pairs of sounds that create meaning, and bringing the same concept into structuralism that human share a common base for thought, leading to the development of different cultures stem from the same unconscious roots.'(Bhatt 2020 p. 10)

In *Myth and Meaning* (1977), Strauss stresses that the anthropologists should study the primary structures of the primitive societies in relation to contemporary societies to understand the structure of human consciousness as he believed that the study of the signification of myths clarifies the processes of human understanding. He goes on to stress the universal features of primitive thinking and human mythology (basically finding pattern or nexus like Frazer) and tries to analyse the relationship between mythology and history and the structural relationship between myth and music.

In his essay, Strauss notes that the separation of scientific and mythical thinking took place in 17th and 18th century, however in the contemporary era more and more sense data is being   reintegrated into scientific explanation example the origin of mathematical ideas Plato's theory and neurophysiology .The whole dilemma of experience versus mind,Strauss   stresses can be solved through some structure of nervous system. For him structuralism when applied to mythical stories specially the shared features would help the anthropologist to find some order.

Strauss gives a comparison of primitive and scientific thinking, both having their own limitations and advantages. He notes that every culture has its own unique features and members of the cultural communities tend to claim originality and superiority over others. Strauss (1978) further gives an account of a myth from Canada to show his method of understanding:

'Let us now consider a myth from western Canada about the skate trying to master or dominate the South Wind and succeeding. It is a story of a time that existed on earth before mankind, that is, of a time when animals and humans were not really distinct; beings were half-human and half-animal. All were extremely bothered by the winds, because the winds, especially the bad winds, were blowing all the time, making it impossible for them to fish and to gather shellfish on the beaches. So they decided that they had to fight the winds and compel them to behave

more decently. There was an expedition in which several human animals or animal humans took part, including the skate, which played an important role in capturing the South Wind. The South Wind was liberated only after he promised not to blow all the time, but only from time to time, or at certain periods. Since that time, it is only at certain periods of the year, or one day out of two, that the South Wind blows; during the rest of the time, mankind can fulfil its activities.' (p.11)

From this, he observes:

> 'When you look very closely at the mythical material exactly as it is told, you notice that the skate acts on account of very precise characteristics, which are of two kinds. The 'Primitive' thinking and the 'civilized' mind 7first is that it is a fish like all flat fish, slippery underneath and rough on its back. And the other capacity, which allow the skate to escape very successfully when it has to fight against other animals, is that it is very large seen from above and below, and extreamly thin when seen from the side. An adversary may think that it is very easy to shoot an arrow and kill the skate because it is so large; but just as the arrow is being aimed, the skate can suddenly turn or slip and show only its profile, which, of course, is impossible to aim at; thus it escapes. So the reason why the skate is chosen is that it is an animal which, considered from either one point of view or the other, is capable of giving—let's say in terms of cybernetics—only a 'yes' or 'no' answer' (Strauss 1978 p.13)

This he does to conclude that there is no divorce between scientific understanding and mythology. Another example of his understanding in the essay is his analysis of affinity between the harelip people and the twins. For this analysis he uses a number of myths from different places to show the association of the two concepts.

In establishing the relationship between myth and history, he asserts that history has come to replace mythology and has the same function for societies without written record of events.

Strauss shows process of understanding the structure of myth to interpret its meaning is just like understanding an "orchestral score", as one has to observe the myth in totality to discern the arrangement of its elements that then reveals its meaning. The reputation of theme both in music and myth thus cause "continuous reconstruction" in the mind the listeners of the music and hearers the mythical story. Similarly, the structure of the language iscomparable to the structure of myth and music as both come from language but grow apart as myth emphasizes

sense and meaning that is embedded in language while music emphasizes the sound. It should be noted that both sound and meanings are elements of language.

In another essay *The Structural Study of Myths* , Strauss emphasizes use of multiple versions of the same myth for analysis. Hans Blumenberg in his *Work in Myths* reinforces this idea making use of all the versions of myths instead of just one.

Roland Barthes' theory lies at the intersection of structuralism and post-structuralism. He critiqued the binary oppositions that form the basis of Levi Strauss' theoretical model. According to him, myths can be understood by dividing them into smaller units called motifs and the relationship between the motifs can be analysed. It is to be noted that Barthes is treating myths as narratives and thus his process of analysis of myths is basically an application of his theory of narratology as enumerated in his essay *The Structural Analysis of Narrative* and *S/Z* . Pramod K Nayar(2018) notes:

> ' that Barthes believed that one can break up a narrative into its constituent elements and discover how they combined with each other. Reading a short story by Balzac,Barthes identified 561 units of meaning of what he called "Lexias". He proposed that we could organise the "lexias" into five main groups all working in combination in a narrative that is the five groups or codes as he called them are the narrative modes of organising the units so that the meaning is generated . These codes Barthes argued are common to all narratives'.(p.24)

Aleksander Boskovic(1995) questions seems significant when he asks "Is there any segment that myths possess and other narratives do not?" (p.132)In other words, what distinguishes myths from other kinds of narrative like historical or fictional. Boskovic(1995) conclude, there is no difference, however:

> 'It is the combination of all the different segments that matters, as well as the culture-specific rules. For example, Vladimir Propp wrote (and strongly influenced structuralists, discourse-analysts, and many others) about the "morphology of the folktale" (1958). However, had he been a Hopi and doing the same thing, his work would have been regarded as a piece on the "morphology of the myth." Russian fairy-tales are not regarded as myths by Russians - but they would be regarded by such in a culture significantly different from the Russian. Another example is the work of the Grimm brothers on the European peasants' folklore, these days almost completely forgotten (that is to say, as far as anthropology is concerned), and hardly anyone

would regard the fairy-tales of the European peasants as myths. However, if one would read a book like the Tsimshian Mythology and compare the Tsimshian myths with the Russian folktales or European fairy tales, the similarities are really striking.'(p.133)

The treatment of methods narrative draws attention to the language of the myth which brings us to the question of the basic of dichotomy between story and discourse and their relationship. One of the main reasons to focus on the language of myth is the fact that it is deeply embedded in the contemporary structure of power and politics. Boskovic illustrates this through the following example:

'Finally, it is interesting to look at the examples of intertwining of myth and history in the Middle East (the Arab-Israeli conflict following the recognition of the independent Jewish state, in part as a recognition of their claim to their sacred place of origin), and in Southeastern Europe. In the latter case, both Serbs and Albanians claim Kosovo/Kosova as their holy land. Both peoples believe that this area holds keys to their claims to statehood. In the Serbian case, most of the medieval churches and monasteries are located at Kosovo, as well as the seat of the Serbian Orthodox Church Patriarchate. According to the myth, in 1389, the mediaeval Serb armies confronted the invasion of the Ottoman Turks at Kosovo. Most of the Serb nobles died in the battle and this heroic defeat is regarded in Serb traditional folklore as the result of the conscious choice of the Prince Lazar, who chose "the Kingdom in Heaven" over "the Kingdom on Earth." Thus, even in their suffering and defeat, the Serbs stood higher than their victors. Of course, from the historical point of view, the claim that the battle ever took place is in some doubt. The Ottoman Turks did not actually gain control of Serbia until mid-15th century, and the leading Serbian historian of the period, Professor SimaCirkovic, claims that the battle never took place. For the Albanians, who gradually became dominant population in the region following the mass exodus of Serbs after 1690, the Kosova is sacred as well. Several very important battles against the Ottoman Turks were fought there in the first half of the 19,h century. The Prizren League was founded there in 1878, and many Albanians put their claim to national sovereignty from that date. Hence, it is easy to see how two mutually exclusive discourses (the Serb and the Albanian one) posit the same area as their mythical sacred space, as their (spiritual, historical and political) place of origin,

following the events that happened in a very distant past. It is also easy to see how Serbs can see all their suffering (including the most recent exodus from Kosovo in June 2000) as yet another spiritual victory, for once again choosing "the Kingdom in Heaven." Wars in the mythical realms could never be definitively lost or won, they tend to perpetuate themselves as long as the myths exist'.(1995 p.135)

The present discourse of Israel-Palestine conflict has deep roots in the language of their mythologies. Both Jews and Muslims share the belief that the land and Al Aqsa mosque is sacred because of their belief in the prophecies which clash with each other in present interpretations. The prophecy mentioned in Torah in John 1:14 is that the destruction of the temple of Solomon which is believed to be in the basement of the Al-Aqsa compound will be followed by the rise of their Messiah. While in Quran it is believed to have been revealed in chapter 17 that the destruction of Al-Aqsa will lead to rise of "Dajjal" a fierce enemy of Muslims, also interpreted as anti-Christ figure. Thus, the study of myths and its language is significant to understand the contemporary political and social discourse and behaviour.

To conclude this section of anthropological study of myth, it can be said that there is no universal definition of myth but narrative approach opens up the approach of finding the fact of the actual ethnographic condition like who is telling the myth , what is the context and how is it significant. Another thing that is agreed upon is that myths are related to" certain deeply embedded existential elements" which are mostly cultural specific but have similarities with others .Myths have been regarded important to decipher the truth of the unconscious world.

III.   MYTH AND PSYCHOLOGY

The study of myths gained importance in the 20th century due to an increased interest in the study of different cultures and the patterns of their development with special reference to the influence of these patterns upon human psychology and it's manifestations in the day to day life. In literary criticism the study of myths became important with the theory of Archetypal criticism that observes and analyses "narrative designs, patterns of action , character types ,themes , images that recur in a wide variety of works of literature, as well as in myths ,dreams and social rituals"(Abrams&Hapham 2015 p.18). A significant antecedent to this theory is found in Carl Jung's *Theory of Collective Unconscious* wherein he uses the term "archetype" to denote the primordial images and symbols inherited by humans from one generation to another and lies latent in our unconscious, this theory was deeply

influenced Sigmund Freud's work in the field of psychology.

Carl Jung's theory of archetypes focuses upon finding similar patterns to discern the structure of a structure of human psyche and fore shadows the literary archetypal theory given by Maud Bodkin Robert Graves Northrop Frye and Joseph Campbell along with others .Jung observed the outward patterns and symbols to get an idea of deep psychology like an archaeologist. According to him, major mythological motifs remain the same for all cultures at all times. He came up with the idea of "collective unconscious"which is hereditary,inter-personal and a result of evolution.

Jung's theory of archetype is only comprehensible in the context of his psychological theory. According to him, psyche is a system of "energy relations". It is used in a broader context than mind as it included all conscious and unconscious processes. Jung propounds that psyche is separable into component parts with "complexes" and archetypal content working as completely secondary selves and not just as drives and processes. However, Jung's model of consciousness should be considered as a metaphor and not reality. Some of the important concepts related to his theory of archetypes are discussed in the following paragraphs.

Collective unconscious is constituted by what Jung has referred to as "archetypes".The archetypes is not meant to denote " an inherited idea but rather an inherited mode of functioning"(Shelburne 1976 p.34). The archetypes influence our disposition according to their patterns.A human is born with these instinctual archetypes then there are also archetype figures and events which find expression in our behaviour and methods and there is also spiritual pole of the archetypes which influence individuals worship and fear of the archetypal images.

Archetypes are psychic structures that humans are born with to think feel and act in specific ways they cannot be perceived directly but their existence can be recognised through images symbols which arise from them. In studying myth and religion Jung noticed that many of them share similar pattern symbols and theme .The psyche is a product of something free personal and formation.

Archetype provide the structures but they do not manifest in the same form in each individual. One of the examples of symbols given by Jung is that of "Mandal"that represents archetype of self.

To conclude, the archetypal theory in psychology goes a long way in shaping the 20th century literary archetypal theory.

IV. LITERARY THEORY AND ARCHETYPES

The English scholar Maud Bodkin is one of the significant archetypal critics of the 20th century. Her book *Archetypal Patterns* is based on Jung's psychological theory of archetypes wherein she studies the deep psychological processed involved in response to poetry.

Bodkin observes(1962) that the "ancient stories owe their persistence, as traditional material of art, to their power of expressing or symbolizing, and so relieving typical human emotions"(p.13) .She illustrates by quoting Dr Jones' analysis of Hamlet and its relation to the tragedy of Oedipus. According to Bodkin (1962), both the narrative of Hamlet and Oedipus as well as Orestes gives expression to the "ambivalent attitude of the son towards the father"(p.13) that oscillates between love and loyalty on one hand and anger and jealousy on the other.

However,the most significant name associated with the archetypal criticism is Northrop Frye. In the four essays included in his *Anatomy of Criticism*, Frye sets out to find what he calls the "the structural principles of literature." His main assumption is that the works of literature are a part of a larger system wherein the meaning and pattern of meanings can be observed.

Frye attempts to provide a universal theory to guide the study of meaning of literature as he illustrates that the myths and literature constitute seven kinds of images- divine, heavenly, human, animal, and vegetable, water and mineral. He further theorizes the movement of these images corresponding to the four main genres or as Frye (1957) refers them as 'mythoi'-romance, comedy, satire and tragedy and the four main seasons of summer, spring, winter and autumn. Thus, Frye offers an approach to analyse the imaginative literature in reference to the mythical heritage His theory draws ideas from Carl Jung and Bodkin but he shifts the focus of archetypal criticism from identifying psychological processes to the thematic study of myths and literary texts. Euene Williamson (1985) in his comparative study of the concepts of Plato's Eidos,Jung's archetypes and Frye's mythoi – 'Plato's "Eidos" And The Archetypes Of Jung And Frye' quotes:

> 'The four mythoi that we are dealing with, and irony, may now be seen as four aspects Agon or conflict is the basis of the archetypal radical of romance being a sequence of Pathos or catastrophe, whether in triumph theme of tragedy. Sparagmos , or the sense action are absent, disorganized or foredoomed confusion and anarchy rule over the world, irony and satire. Anagnorisis , or recognition rising in triumph around a still somewhat bride, is the archetypal theme of comedy'(p-99)

V.   ANALYSIS

The narrative of the "Seven Sleepers of Epheseus" is the embodiment of the general nature of myths and legend to cross and disregard socio-religious boundaries, therefore providing the student of myths and archetypes a broad scope to look for patterns and discover the progress of cultures with the development of the narrative through cultures. The narrative is a blend of historical actions of Emperors Decius and Theodosius II with religious beliefs and hopes.

The narrative was first recorded in Latin by Gregory of Tour, however a more famous version of the narrative is recorded in *The Golden Legends* by Jacobus de Voraigne. The narrative is given paramount importance in the religion as it is believed to have been revealed in the Holy Quran by God to Prophet Mohammad (p.b.u.h.). According to some scholars the narrative is said to have been inspired by Jewish story of Abimelech, the Ethiopian recorded in Paralipomena of Jeremiah in the text of 4 Baruch and the Greek tale of Epimenides of Crete taken from Diogenes Laertus *Lives Of Eminent Philosophers*

In this short analysis, I shall use various sources of the myth and make a comparative study of their themes that would reveal the social beliefs of the contemporary cultures. The next step would be to use the common themes (here only Death and Resurrection) and analyse their treatment and presence in the present literary discourse.

The first source that shall be dealt here is Jacobus de Voraigne's account of the story of the persecution of the seven young men by Emperor Decius, known supporter of the pagan tradition against the Christian faith,   for as noted in translation "scorning sacrifices to idols, they were hiding themselves in their home and were free for both fastings and prayers.". These men who were seven in number withdrew to a mountain in Celion and started living secretely when one day as they were close to be found God caused them to fall asleep only to be woken up after years during the reign of Christian king Theodosius II and particularly at the time when there was a general weakening of faith in the society to make people remind of resurrection after death.

The narrative of Sleepers of Cave emphasizes the theme of political tyranny and it response martyrdom. The second part of the narrative is set in the time when people needed another vision or reminder that is captured in the imagery of resurrection of cave of sleepers and the recognition of their martyrdom.

Another important aspect of this narrative is the commemorative tablet and monument that played a significant role in the recognition of the heroism of the sleepers of the cave as the main purpose the narrative is to inspire people's faith in Christian God. The narrative embodies a story of great miracle from God and heroism for the sake of God.

"literature and folklore lends its hand to fulfill the desires of Christian memory. At the same time it preserves pieces and themes of little known periods of history, while also immortalizing early Christian opinion of them through literature. Likewise, through the Seven Sleepers, these two periods, which challenged the spirit and fortitude of the Christian faith, met their match in these miraculous martyrs. And just as the Sleepers of this treasured tale, the message of the story transcends its historical settings, and later geographical ones as well, to continue to influence readers centuries after its creation"(Collaco 2011 43).

Another important record of the narrative is in the Holy Quran. The story is revealed as a sign from Allah (s.w.t) to Prophet Mohammad (p.b.u.h.) to make the unbelievers especially the Christians in the crowd believe in the authenticity of the Quran as a word of God. The narrative is present in the 18th chapter of Quran called "Surah-Al Kahf" , "Kahf" meaning cave. It starts with the declaration Quran being free from any deviations or flaws. The first ten lines include a direct address to the Christians as God declares that the Quran is a warning to those who say that God has off-spring. It should be noted that there are multiple ayahs or verses in the Quran that it has come to confirm the Bible, Torah and the Psalms (all believed by Muslims to be direct Books revealed by God). Therefore, the narrative that follows is a confirmation to the knowledge of the Christians regarding the matter but also served the purpose of correcting the deviations as one of the main themes that is followed in the Quranic description of the narrative is the contrast between the infinite knowledge of God and limited knowledge that belongs to humans, that too granted by God, thus making it clear that Quran should be read to gain knowledge that is revealed by God. Another important aspect of the knowledge theme is the lesson in correct use of curiosity. The narrative in Quran lists the number of attempts that have been made by various scholars or people in general regarding the number of sleepers and years that they were sleeping to point at the futility of their efforts and analysis for that knowledge like the knowledge of the Day of Judgement belongs to God.

Gwendolyn Collaco(2011) in her paper titled 'With Sleep Comes a Fusion of Worlds: The Seven Sleepers of Ephesus   through   Formation   and   Transformation' emphasizes the adaptation of the narrative for to fit the agendas of:

> "magical practitioners, Sufi mystics and sultans, traceable through the art pertaining to each purpose.

These various adaptations build off each other as literary interpretations of the Seven Sleepers become more esoteric in the growing sects of Islam. Therefore, its artistic interpretations range from the most practical level of household magic, in the form of a bronze mirror, and progress through mysticism, as seen in a set of lusterware tiles, and finally to confirming Isma'iliShiism of the Safavid Empire in manuscript illustrations of the Falnama, or Book of Omens. Yet regardless of the adaptation, the artists and patrons always maintain at least one of the three main themes within the story—loyalty, faith and divine protection—maintaining the core of the tale despite its changing faces and use." (p.108)

Therefore, one can easily observe the common themes of death and resurrection , of faith and heroism and tyranny and sacrifice in both the versions of narrative. The difference is that of religious belief they the narrative is being used to clarify. While the Christian narrative justifies sainthood of the seven sleepers, while the Quranic version affirms the belief in direct protection from God and justify Quran as a revelation from God.

The next step is to analyse the themes of the myth and their presence and significance in the present literary discourse. This is possible because of the treatment of myth as narrative and also treating literature as a cultural artefact rather than a product of author's imagination. As is stated by Jung that the psyche constitutes archetypes which are primordial psychic structures that lies in a person's collective unconscious and is inherited and shared by all, the archetype may have multiple manifestations in the form of symbols, imagery, themes and motifs and it can be added that these representations or manifestations of a single archetype vary according to the contemporary culture and context.

The narrative of sleepers of the cave is a clear representation of the archetype of death and resurrection. In the literary context, the theme of death and resurrection is basically a motif represented in a number of poems and narratives especially revived in the modern era in the works of T.S. Eliot. Symbols like rivers or lakes are used for representing the theme. In 'The Wasteland', invokes the myth or narrative of Easter to refer to the theme of crucifixion and resurrection of Jesus Christ, this he does to cure people of their faithlessness in modern era, reminiscent of how the miracle itself was needed at time of Theodosius II to remind people to follow the faith. Thus, myth and literature both are products of the society and also play a major role in shaping the socio-religious ideology of the cultures.

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