Chapter 5

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The humankind has travelled the journey of thousands of years on the planet earth with the help of nature, culture, science and arts. Now human being has reached in the era of information and technology. Since the formation of society, human beings are striving to get rid of the time bounds. It has remained the wish to get free from constrain of ‘kaal’ that is time and law of ‘prakriti’ that is nature. Though human being is striving hard, till date they could not find the remedy for being free from the bondage of time. Human being has always suffered from a sense of incompleteness. It has lead to the desire to gain the utopian state of completeness. It is also depicted in the myths of Gods and Goddesses that they also expect the completeness. These desires, experiences, inventions, social, spiritual, cultural customs are vividly presented through various means of arts by classic to postmodern poets, dramatists and other literary artists.

In this research, researcher has studied selected plays of Chinu Modi and Girish Karnad in the light of reception of myths in their dramas. Girish Karnad, an influential figure of Kannada literature influenced Chinu Modi in representation of myth. Chinu Modi also has earned name and fame by his valuable contribution to the field of literature. He is one of the prominent dramatists who introduced modern
trends of drama in Gujarat. He is known as experimental dramatists in Gujarati Literature.

The observations and findings are derived in the light of selected dramas i.e. Jalaka, Ashvamedh, Bhasmasur and Kalparivartan by Modi and Yayati, Hayavadana, Bali: The Sacrifice and Naga-Mandala by Karnad. It is fair to state that Girish Karnad and Chinu Modi successfully revived ancient myths and philosophy in postmodern Indian drama tradition. This could create a great impact on spectators, readers and critics. As a tool to express psyche, myth has great significance in postmodern drama. It bridges two generations and passes virtues, morals, ethics, traditions, and explanations of social and religious customs and life experiences from one generation to another. The wisdom of ancestors is passed through myth which is a well-accepted means of entertainment as well. Girish Karnad and Chinu Modi have worked on religious and traditional myths and tried to review them for the betterment of new generations. Both found the relevance of myth in modern era and come out with new interpretations. Both of them found and tried to establish myth as a remedy to problems of modern men. Chinu Modi and Girish Karnad give modern treatment to a mythological theme in their dramas. Spectators and readers find blend of traditional and modern literature which pleases their aesthetic senses. It has also proved that the knowledge tradition of Indian in form of our national literature is as vast as ocean. Modern writers need not to go elsewhere for raw material. Myth bridges generation gap in an entertaining and delightful manner.
Among all the forms of literature, drama is considered as one of the most powerful and effective genres of ancient art. It is one of the oldest forms of literature that also suits to describe modern and postmodern society respectively. The chief goal of the drama is not only to please the audience but also to make them aware of certain realities of life. In the modern drama myth plays an important role which bridges present with the past.

The study of literary work with the reference of another literary text brings the domain of comparative literature in the discussion. Comparative literature is a methodology to study literature across the language and culture. It widens the area of literary text and helps to understand culture, language and psychology pertaining to other literary text.

The plays of Girish Karnad and Chinu Modi contain many similarities especially in the context of reception of Indian myths from folklore, regional popular tells, history and epics like the *Mahabharata* and *the Ramayana*. The plays are written with similar objectives. They have utilized regional drama from or folk forms *Yakshagana* and *Bhavai* respectively to depict the attitude of modern men along To stretch the discussion further, some of the other similar characteristic of both the dramatists are noted down like, their power of observation, imagination and great understanding of life. Through these they deal with the burning issues of modern time and try to provide remedies for the same. With the help of drama form they have presented the picture of society in colorful manner. On basis of need of time and society they adopted myths and created their masterpieces. Drama form is
having tight connection with performance. Script and enactment are like two sides of a coin. The knowledge and understanding of stage geography is another common trait amongst them. All the plays penned by them are staged successfully by various groups and received appreciations.

Apart from the similar aspects, dissimilarity is also notable. Karnad being master of drama or theatre art earned more fame worldwide. His command over English language made him more superior than Modi and other dramatists. Chinu Modi has penned almost all the forms of literature, and his specialization has remained in poetry. While studying dramas of Karnad and Modi, one can say that comparatively Karnad has remained superior in reception, narrative techniques and dramatization as well while Modi has remained superior in use of poetry in drama. Though both are trendsetters respectively, they have dissimilarity in terms of language, characterization and narratives.

In the beginning of the research, history of Indian drama tradition is discussed in general. Traditional India drama has long and rich history of writing and performance of the drama. The roots of Indian drama lie in the tradition of Sanskrit literature of the Vedic Period. In those days, drama considered as the significant means of communication and connected with the routines of people. *Natyaashastra* by Bharat Muni, the oldest text and significant treatise on the theory of drama deals with all the major aspects of drama namely stage setting, music, plot construction, characterization, dialogue, acting and dance. In fact, *Natyaashastra* is the
first major treatise on the art of performance which depicts the entire framework of
drama in history of Indian drama tradition. Further the history of Indian English
Drama, Gujarati Drama and Kannada Drama is discussed in brief. Indian English
drama evolved during 18th and 19th century. Gujarati and Kannada drama tradition
have their roots in Bhavai and Yakshagana respectively which has great impact on the
two dramatists selected for this research.

In comparative literature, reception theory deals with the literary influence of
one text on the other directly or indirectly. In the light of reception theory selected
dramas are studied by researcher. It found one of the most effective theories of
comparative literature. It provides scope for various perspectives to study explicit
and implicit meanings of the literary work.

The terms myth, mythology along with their role in drama are discussed. Myths are
the perfect tool to pass the treasure of knowledge, wisdom and ethics, which has been gained through experiences of one generation to other. This channel
of traditions makes culture and civilization live. Basically it is story form but from
the very ancient time dramatists have shown keen interest in it. For the drama form
it is quite suitable content, as it is popular amongst folk and possesses the dramatic
elements. The drama form uses myth as a theme and at the other extent myth also
needs drama as a platform, so both walk hand to hand. This chapter intends to
clarify the basic terminology and prepares ground for the arguments to be
presented in forthcoming chapters.
Myths are usually regarded as fairy tales or beautifully narrated flights of imagination invented by primitive people for their amusement or consolation in the face of baffling natural phenomena. Myth points the collective unconscious of mankind and that can be the reason why myths continue to exercise a profound influence to lives of mankind even today. One can state that art forms need myths as much as myths need them, for if art forms illuminate myths, myths confirm arts to reveal the emotions by going beyond their limitations and can result into wonderful experience for both, artist and receiver. Several disciplines have tried to analyze myths by applying various tools, trying to find what myth is, what it stands for, how it works and what its purpose is. Still to peep into the importance and relevance of myth researcher has taken some views of critics and scholars for the more clarity in the arguments and the research.

Various scholars and critics have given their views on myth to supplement the argument of relevance and importance of myth in present time. It speaks on universality of myth. Girish Karnad and Chinu Modi also belong to same philosophy and so could create such masterpieces.

The brief details about celebrated playwrights Girish Karnad and Chinu Modi are presented which covers their biography, literary contributions and awards – achievements. Further the major plays apart from the select plays, like Tughlaq, Dream of Tipu Sultan, Tale- Dande, Fire and the Rain by Girish Karnad and Navalsha Heerji, Naishadhrai, Sukdan, Khalifano Vesh Yaani Aurangzebby Chinu Modi are
precisely described. These dramas are summarized and appreciated to develop the better understanding about the dramatists and their dramaturgy. It also proves the mastery of dramatist over variety of subject matters. The styles vary when playwright is dealing with different subject matters. Girish Karnad and Chinu Modi are not limited to mythological plays. They are highly experimental dramatists. These plays are staged by directors and actors of national and international level.

Present research work has focused discussions on comparative analysis through the similarities and dissimilarities found in the Jalaka and Yayati, Ashvamedh and Bali: The Sacrifice. The researcher has discussed the reception of myths, relevance of myths, modern interpretations, and unique treatment to women character through theme, plot, characterization, language and other tools applied by the dramatists. It is observed that how human psyche, and relevance of myths in present time is depicted through creative dramaturgy applied in these dramas. Myths are also discussed from the perspectives of its relevance and usage as remedy. Popular myths along with their universal effects are portrayed through modern theatrical arts and abilities. Both of these dramatists are good with theatrical art which is very much important as drama is a performing art. They have utilized folk elements and mythological elements in their dramas. Bhavai and Yakshagana play major role in creative construction of acceptable dramas.

Discussions are further stretched on comparative analysis through the similarities and dissimilarities found in Bhasmasur and Naga-Mandala, Kalparivartan
and *Hayavadana*, plays by Girish Karnad and Chinu Modi. The researcher has discussed the reception of myths, relevance of myths, modern interpretations and unique treatment to women character through theme, plot, characterization, language and other tools applied by the dramatists. Reconstruction of myth through reception needs excellent literary potential. Playwrights like Karnad and Modi acquire it. For them, myths are more rational and logical; they are created with the perspective of upliftment.

In this process drama has played significant role. Since long time drama is a medium to preach and delight. It has to touch to the heart of people of all class. To make this process more easy and effective dramatists deal with the myth, which is well known to folk and their faith.

The plays of Girish Karnad and Chinu Modi contain many similarities like reception of myth, characterization and dramatization techniques. Indian myths from Folklore and *the Mahabharata* are received by these dramatists. Even the influence of classic Sanskrit drama is seen in the plays of Karnad and Modi. They have also adopted the *Yakshagana* and *Bhavai* method to present the ancient myth which helps plot and theme to flourish. The portrayal of women characters in dramas of both dramatists is appealing. Selected dramas possess prominent role of female protagonists. In the time of science and technology, dramatists have not found any change in social situations. Good and evil of society are similar with ancient time. Their forms and methods have changed but the issues have remained
same. So, both the dramatists adopted myths and implemented them according to their need. Both of them took liberation in moulding the myths from their original sources. They were focused during the process of crafting plays, so the treatment and changes are made accordingly.

The interesting thing is conceptions or misconception about right and wrong set by individuals on basis of their subjective experiences. Everything is based on perspective of an individual. The conflict comes when the acceptance of others’ opinions and freedom is questioned. One has to accept the uniqueness of others and behave respectively. Rethinking on attitude and conceptions, beliefs and needs of time may lead society towards harmonious and peaceful life. Myths are trying

During this research researcher has realized that Indian sub-continent is full of potential contents. The ancient treasure of wisdom in various forms can be reused for the sake of learning and entertainment too. Culture of Gujarat and Karnataka is also rich in its nature. The regional literature of these regions is rich and worthy. Such reception is found in both the regional literatures. Postmodern literary figures have shown reliance on myths. Myths are used as a vehicle of wisdom, knowledge, virtues, morals and life experiences. Myths are not mere imaginative but their presentation is in such a way that connotative meaning seem absurd and irrational. If one dives deep into myth then can find the great wisdom and witty presentation of information, feelings, problems and remedies of the problems.
Girish Karnad and Chinu Modi’s plays reflect contemporary Indian society and ancient culture along with contemporary social life through the help of myths, folk-tales and legends and history. They knit timeless truths about human life and emotions together. They also connect ancient Indian stories with the changing social circumstances and conceptions about morals for modern men. Modi and Karnad explore myth, and change its function. Use of myth is to transcend its own factual core by glorifying it, elaborating upon it, refining it and then enriching itself at each telling and retelling.

Karnad and Modi here not only using myths as raw material for their plays but they are also decolonizing the Indian literature, which has been interpreted under the influence of western philosophy and Christian religion. The motif is quite clear when they question the customs but paint them very carefully. It is a process of preserving the culture in modern framework.

The significant characteristic of post-modern or post-colonial literature is to redefine the national literature, as per the culture of the nation. Karnad and Modi strived hard and successfully could do so.

Karnad and Modi both are rebellious in nature and have scholarly insight in history, religion and culture. They have a unique vision for the terms and concepts of religion especially Hindu religion and Hindu society. Karnad and Modi believe that, the concepts of Hinduism, morals and values are believed not original ancient or Vedic Hindu. Concepts widely spread amongst modern folk is not original as per Hindu tradition.
Postmodern literature has focused on sensibilities of nation. The colonial logic and influences are challenged, not only that but rebelled at certain extent. They encountered with the traditions and literature of west too. But it could not influence them expect the form and theatrical art. They studied western literature carefully and related their knowledge with the current requirement of Indian society. During the process of creation, they could do so good that their plays have universal effect.

Transformation of popular myth in the modern plays signifies its relevance and faith of people in it. It helps young generations to be connected with roots. In any literature history plays significant role. As literature is the mirror of society, political, religious, economical situations influence it respectively. Oral literature; folklore and myth are carrier of tradition and culture, which creates scope for folk to dig out the uninfluenced, unbiased life styles and culture of their ancestors. Question, how and why certain cultural, social and religious customs are formed and came into existence? It can be answered through interpreting myths. It is a liable and source for digging the history and actual picture of culture. It can be interpreted and transcribed as per the need and mood of time, place and circumstances.

During the formative time of human civilization a whole system of communication is developed. Language, religion, culture and end number of abstract and practical ideas about nature and human are formed. If one wants to understand all these, science only cannot give all the answers, one has to go to the folklore and myths for the same. They are rational in nature but the presentation is exaggerative and entertaining. It is because of its form. One has to accept that
because of such form it is widely accepted and preserved after thousands of years too. Even if it is imaginative, it distresses men from the daily burden, stress and unpleasant worldly experiences. Myth is the key to open the mysteries set by wise ancestors. Intensive reading of myths and its use with various perceptions in modern time is nurtured by the genius artists like Karnad and Modi led a new era in literature of India. Postmodern literature of India is too young but the way it is growing is notable.

The plays of Girish Karnad and Chinu Modi reflect contemporary Indian society and ancient cultural along with minute picture of social life through the help of myths, folk-tales, legends and history. They knit timeless truths about human life and emotions together. They also connect ancient Indian stories with the changing social circumstances and conceptions about morals for modern men. Modi and Karnad explore myth, and change its function. Use of myth is to transcend its own factual core by glorifying it, elaborating upon it, refining it and then enriching itself at each telling and retelling.

This research can be extended through taking some of the important elements separately or in light of comparative study from the dramas of Karnad and Modi. One can further study the dramatists in general or particular dramas, from the perspective of women characters, application of the received myths and characterization. Dramatization also can be an interesting area of studying theatre of modern and ancient time. Modern theatre, as a combination of ancient dramatization art and modern dramatization techniques, role of technology is also an aspect to
peep into the constructive process of writing a play. Translation is also one of the important aspects one can take into consideration for research. These dramas have capability to be staged and actually they have been staged too, so translation of Modi‘ plays into English or any Indian language is a fruitful idea. The same way dramas of Karnad can be translated into Gujarati or other Indian language. The role of time and nature also can be studied for the betterment of society and research field.