

Gandharva Myth: An Analysis of Reconstruction v/s Deconstruction in the films

Njan Gandharvan and *Gandharvakshetram*

Synopsis

Myths and archetypes play an inevitable role in the history of our culture. Our history is a storehouse of innumerable myths owing to different mythologies. Most of the people are inclined towards traditional myths even in this postmodern world. Myths have been inscribed in the psyche of the humanity; Mythologies have widened its arena into the films too.

This project entitled “Gandharva Myth: An Analysis of Reconstruction v/s Deconstruction in the films *Njan Gandharvan* and *Gandharvakshetram*” focuses on the representation of same myth in diverse ways. The first chapter gives a description of Gandharva myth and introduce the directors and their works. The second chapter delves into the theory of collective unconscious and archetypes proposed by Carl Gustav Jung. The third chapter analyses the demythologization of Gandharva myth through the illusion of the heroine depicting in the film *Gandharvakshetram*. This chapter describes the heroine as a being caught up in between fantasy and reality. The fourth chapter explores the elements of demystification in Gandharva myth focusing on the perspective of Gandharvan, the hero of the film *Njan Gandharvan*. It also analyses Gandharvan as an archetypal hero. The fifth chapter aims at unveiling the levels of interpreting the same myth and gives a humanistic approach to the mythical character Gandharvan.

Treesamary Raju

Gandharva Myth: An Analysis of Reconstruction v/s Deconstruction in the films

Njan Gandharvan and Gandharvakshetram

Dissertation submitted to Mahatma Gandhi University, Kottayam in partial fulfillment
of the requirement for the award of the degree of Master of Arts in English

Treesamary Raju

Register Number: 180011002145



The Post Graduate Department of English

Bharata Mata College, Thrikkakara

2020

Certificate

Certified that this is a bonafide report of the project entitled *Gandharva Myth: An Analysis of Reconstruction v/s Deconstruction in the films Njan Gandharvan and Gandharvakshetram* (Register No. 180011002145) for the fulfillment of the requirement for the M.A. degree in English under Mahatma Gandhi University, Kottayam during the year 2018-2020.

Project Guides:

Prof. Jojoy K.V

Ms. Lissy Kachappilly

Assistant Professor

Asst Professor, Head of the Department

Post Graduate Department of English

Post Graduate Department of English

Bharata Mata College, Thrikkakara

Bharata Mata College, Thrikkakara

Declaration

I, Treesamary Raju, hereby affirm that the dissertation titled *Gandharva Myth: An Analysis of Reconstruction v/s Deconstruction in the films Njan Gandharvan* and *Gandharvakshetram* a genuine record of work done by me under the guidance of Prof.Jojoy K.V and Ms.Lissy Kachappilly of the Post Graduate Department of English, Bharata Mata College, Thrikkakara and has not been submitted previously for the award of any masters or degree.

Date: 22-07-2020 Treesamary Raju

Place: Thrikkakara Register Number: 180011002145

Acknowledgement

First of all, I would like to thank God Almighty for his blessings that helped me in completing the project. At the outset, I would take this opportunity to thank my project guide Prof. Joji K.V for his guidance, encouragement and support. I would like to extend my sincere gratitude to Prof. Lissy Kachappilly, Head of the Department of English, Bharata Mata College, for her support. I would like to thank the faculty members for their substantial contribution towards this effort. Last but not the least I thank my friends and classmates for their timely assistance that helped in making this project possible.

Treesamary Raju

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Chapter 1

Introduction

“Ancient or not, mythology can only have an historical foundation, for myth is a type of speech chosen by history” (Barthes 55). Myth is the oldest form of storytelling in human history. It depicts particularly the stories of gods, heroes, spirits and universal events of great importance. Myths explore certain themes like good, evil, love, jealousy, war, peace through different characters, vivid plots, deepest emotions and actions. We are exposed to different mythologies since childhood. History is enriched with myriad of myths and archetypes; it has become part and parcel of our cultural heritage. Myths have been internalised into the psyche of the people by means of books and oral transmission; in fact, myths are still influencing modern society and fascinating to the people nowadays.

India is the land of cultural diversities and famous for myths and legends. Myths play an important role in the transmission of tradition and culture from generation to generation. This myth, which is an exemplar for the entire humanity, is commonly rendered in both oral and written forms. Myths are important to reinforce the cultural identity of the people to where they belong. It represents an inextricable connection between a land and its people. Myths vary from one region to the other. Many artists have influenced the mythical representation of gods, spirits and heroes throughout history. Myths operate in the borders between reality and fantasy and also deal with great excitement and inspiration.

Humans are exposed to the environment they live in. Carl Gustav Jung, the famous psychologist claims that, there is an inherent tendency in humans to experience the world unconsciously. He proposed the theory of collective

unconscious which states that all humans share a deep level of unconscious universally and it is the state of repressed feelings and thoughts. The archetypes are the contents of this part which constitute to the personal aspect of the psyche. There are archetypal images such as father, mother, child, sun, moon and so on. The well known expression of the archetype is myths and fairytales; Dreams are manifestations of archetypes. Certainly, myths influence our unconscious mind to a great extent from the psychological point of view.

Indian mythology is one of the richest elements of Indian culture, which enriches and makes it a unique one in the world. In Indian mythology, particularly Hindu stories related to gods and demons serve a medium to inculcate interest in Indian culture in the younger generation. Hindu mythology finds its fullest expression in the Indian epics like the Ramayana, the Mahabharata, the Bhagvad Gita, the Vedas, the Upanishads, the Vishnu Purana and so on. Gandharva myth is very popular in Hindu mythology. Gandharvas are mythological male creatures and husbands of Apsaras. They are talented musicians who entertain the gods with their music. They often act as the messengers between gods and humans. There is another belief saying that, Gandharvas were assistants of Indra and rewarded with a space in heaven. As the deities were all provided with a wife or wives, the Gandharvas were not neglected in this respect. These beautiful apsaras were forced to visit and entertain Indra and other gods, when they were in a desperate situation. The Gandharvas and their fragile matrimonial alliances with the Apsaras have come to known as Gandharva marriage which is contracted by mutual consent and without formal rituals.

The Gandharvas, according to the Vishnu Purana, were sons of Brahma. The Gandharvas were next born, imbibing melody, drinking

of the goddess of speech, they were born, and thence their appellation (gam dhayantah, drinking speech). In another place the same Purana makes them the offspring of Kasyapa and Arishta , and therefore grandchildren of Brahma. The Padma Purana speaks of them as the children of Vach. They are said to be sixty millions in number. They defeated the Nagas, or snake-gods, seized their jewels, and usurped their kingdom. In their distress the snakes resorted to Vishnu, who promised to enter in Purukutsa and destroy them (The Hindu,407)

The most popular rendition of archetypes and myths during the last few decades were films and it provided innumerable representations and interpretations of myths. Films often portray myths as a juncture between fantasy and reality. It paves a way to decipher psychological traits by delving deep into the unconscious realm of the characters. Two distinct representations of the Gandharva myth can be seen in the Malayalam films *Njan Gandharvan* and *Gandharvakshethram*. Though these films were released during nineties within a considerable time shift, the way of presentation marks a great difference. This project attempts to unveil the possibilities of reinterpreting a myth into multiple realms.

Njan Gandharvan (1991), an esoteric fantasy romantic film is the last venture of Padmarajan produced by Good Night Mohan. The concept of Gandharva , according to Hindu mythology is described through the film. It is a tale of romance about a girl's love and passion towards a celestial lover who appeared from a statue that she found on a beach but is invisible to others. The film was a box office hit and still holds a value in the hearts of the Malayalis. Nitish Bharadwaj, the lead actor of the film says that, "I have been in film industry for a long time. I have done Hindi

movies and Marathi movies as an actor, director and screenwriter. But no movies have made me popular like *Njan Gandharvan*” (Kumar). The songs of this film were composed by Johnson with lyrics penned by Kaithapram Damodaran Namboothiri. The soundtrack was released by Tharangini, and the songs had an exceptional reception even today. The film had bagged FAC award in the year 1991.

P. Padmarajan (1945-1991) was a renowned Indian filmmaker, writer and author who has created a landmark in the history of Malayalam literature and film industry. He was born in Muthukulam near Haripad in Alappuzha. He entered into the field of literature as a writer. His stories deal with the themes of romance, mystery, passion and so on. Some of them are considered as the best in Malayalam literature; His first novel *Nakshathrangale Kaaval* won the Kerala Sahithya Academy award in 1972. He entered the world of Malayalam films by writing the screen play for Bharathan’s directorial debut *Prayaanam* (1975) and proved to be one of the promising scriptwriters for the industry. Later he moved on to direct films, beginning with *Peruvazhiyambalam*(1979) which was widely accepted among the people over the world. Both his literary and film works are considered to be excellent and most of them are best of its kind. He had the power to capture true human emotions in his works.

Padmarajan is known as a great experimenter who explored various themes in his films. He is very specific in subject, locale, setting and casting. He is noted for his fine and detailed screenwriting expressive direction style. In the article *Padnarajan, The Celestial Filmmaker!* describes that,

All the leading men (characters) from Padmarajan’s films are still the most desirable ones. The women from his movies will have a character of their own. The music from his films are unmatched till date. Even

the background scores will say that they belong to a Padmarajan movie. Beyond filmmaking techniques and cinematic notions, all his films had a soul to its story, the characters and their emotions. And that is why even a subtext of a scene could communicate with the audience (Nandakumar)

Many Padmarajan films have surpassed the realms of imagination. His other prominent films are *Thoovanthumbikal*(1987), *Desatanakkili Karayarilla* (1986), *Namukku Parkkan Munthiri Thoppukal*(1986). Padmarajan was the founder of a new school of film making in Malayalam cinema, along with Bharathan and K.G George, in the 1980's, became a milestone in the industry. The term parallel film is used to describe his style of film making. The adieu of Padmarajan at a young age is an unredeemable loss for the industry.

Gandharva Kshethram(1972) was quite popular film and is still renowned as one of the greatest classics of Malayalam industry. The film is about the shattered love relationship of a girl and a man whom she misunderstood as a Gandharvan. The illusionary world created by the heroine with gandharvan leads her to a troublesome life. The film stars Sharada, Prem Nazir, Madhu, Thilakan in the lead roles. The film had musical score by G.Devarajan. It is directed by A.Vincent and produced by M.Kunchacko. Aloysius Vincent(1928 – 2015) was an Indian cinematographer and director known for works in Malayalam, Tamil, Telugu and Hindi language films. He is known for his distinct style of cinematography and has handled camera for almost eighty movies. From the 1960s, he directed films including Malayalam films *Bhargavi Nilayam and Murappennu*. Vincent received the Film fare Best Cinematographer Award for Prem Nagar (1974) starring Rajesh Khanna. In 2003, the

Indian Society of Cinematographers (ISC) awarded him an Honorary Membership, along K.K Mahajan and V.K Murthy. He received the J.C.Daniel award in 1996.

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Chapter 2

The Collective Unconscious and Archetypes

Human mind is capable of absorbing multitude of emotions and impressions from the surroundings. The unconscious is the primary source of human behaviour. Our feelings, actions and decisions influenced by our past experiences are stored in the unconscious. “According to Carl Jung, myths emerge from the unconscious and contain truth about human existence. Myths are first and foremost psychic phenomena that reveal the nature of soul. In fact, the whole mythology could be taken as a sort of projection of the collective unconscious” (Stenudd). Hence, myths act as the instruments to discover the unconscious which is the inherited hidden part of the psyche.

The theory of collective unconscious is one of the distinctive features of Jung’s psychology. It refers to the idea that a segment of the deepest unconscious mind is genetically inherited. According to him, it refers to the structures of the unconscious mind which are shared among the beings of the same species. Although Jung initially worked with fellow psychoanalyst Sigmund Freud, later they took different paths, with former disagreeing with Freud’s emphasis on the influence of factors such as libido on behaviour and personality. Instead, Jung focused on myth and its meaning within the individual psyche, and the way in which they influenced one another. Jung learned that the psyche is made up of a number of separate interacting systems. The three main ones are ego, personal unconscious and collective unconscious.

According to Jung, the ego represents the conscious mind as it comprises the thoughts, memories, and emotions a person is aware of. It is the centre of consciousness and organise various intuitions, feelings and sensations. The ego is

largely responsible for feelings of identity and continuity. Jung relates Freud's theory of personal unconscious to the collective unconscious, which is the product of the interaction between the collective unconscious and the development of the individual during his life. The personal unconscious contains memories which are unaware as we still possess, often as a result of repression. As we exist in a conscious state, we do not have direct access to our personal unconscious, but it emerges in our dreams. Jung also outlined an important feature of personal unconscious called complexes. It is the collection of thoughts, feelings, attitudes and memories that focus on a single subject.

The theory of Collective Unconscious is the key to Jung's theories of mind as well as a great contribution to the Personality theory. This is a level of unconscious shared with other members of the human species comprising memories from our ancestral and evolutionary past. As Jung says, "The form of the world into which a person is born is already inborn in him, as a virtual image" (Jung 188). According to Jung, the human mind has innate characteristics imprinted on it as a result of evolution. These universal predispositions stem from our ancestral past. Fear of dark, or of snakes are certain examples and this idea has recently been revived in the theory of Prepared Conditioning.

As Jung says,

The existence of the collective unconscious means that individual consciousness is anything but a tabula rasa and is not immune to predetermining influences. On the contrary, it is in the highest degree influenced by inherited presuppositions, quite apart from the unavoidable influences exerted upon it by the environment. The collective unconscious comprises in itself the psychic life of our ancestor's right back to the earliest beginnings (The Structure, 112).

Jung proposed that we are each born with a collective unconscious rather than being born as tabula rasa or being influenced by purely by our environment. This contains a set of shared memories and ideas, which we can all identify with, regardless of the culture we are born into or the time period in which we live. The collective unconscious is common to all human beings and is responsible for a number of beliefs and instincts, such as spirituality, sexual behaviour, and life and death instincts. Though unconscious is the product of collective experiences inherited in the genes, individuals do not know what thoughts and images are in their collective unconscious. We cannot communicate through it, but we recognize some of the same ideas innately, including archetypes. This theory encompasses the soul of humanity at a large extent. It has a great influence on the life of individuals and they find meaning through their experiences. This collective unconscious does not develop individually rather it is inherited. The repressed content of the unconscious has much to do with the internal thoughts of the psyche. As Jung puts it, "Lost in one self" is the good way of describing the state (37). Eventually, the unconscious will break through in the forms of dreams or images.

Archetypes were a concept introduced by Jung, who believed that archetypes are models of people, behaviours, or personalities which are inborn elements that play a major role in influencing human behaviour. The elements of dreams, fantasies, and motifs of certain myths work on the psyche of the individual owing to different traditions and influences. Jung refers to these particular elements as primordial images or archetypes, belongs to the unconscious realm of the psyche. In Jungian psychology, the archetypes represent universal patterns and images that are part of the collective unconscious. They are components of collective unconscious that are impersonal and inherited traits which promote thoughts, emotions and behaviours. In

literary criticism the term archetype denotes recurrent narrative designs, patterns of actions and character types, themes and images which are identifiable in a wide variety of literature, as well as in myths, dreams and even social rituals. “They exist universally in the psyche, and prepare individuals psychologically to deal with life experiences that are universally common”(Chang)

Where do these archetypes come from? Jung believed that these archetypes exist in the collective unconscious. He suggested these models are innate, universal and hereditary. Jung describes “All the most powerful ideas in history go back to archetypes”(153). He believed that the human mind retains fundamental, unconscious, biological aspects of our ancestors. These archaic and mythic characters that make up the archetypes reside with people from all over the world, as these archetypes that symbolize basic human motivations, values, and personalities.

Jung suggests,

This is particularly true of religious ideas, but the central concepts of science, philosophy, and ethics are no exception to this rule. In their present form, they are variants of archetypal ideas created by consciously applying and adapting these ideas to reality. For it is the function of consciousness, not only to recognise and assimilate the external world through the gateway of the senses but to translate into visible reality the world within us (153).

He believed that each archetype plays an important role in the personality of a person and most people are dominated by one specific archetype. The way in which an archetype is expressed or realized depends upon number of factors including an individual’s cultural influences and unique personal experiences. Jung discovered several archetypal figures namely, hero, mentor, mother and child and archetypal

situations such as birth, death and marriage. For the sake of this project, the following Jungian archetypes are taken into account: The Anima, The Animus, The Persona, The Shadow and The Self.

Sex is determined by the majority of male or female genes in a body. But there are minority genes of other sex in a body which cannot be neglected. Therefore a man has within him an unconscious feminine figure called the anima and the counterpart in women, the animus. The anima/animus represents the 'true self' rather than the image we present to others and serves as the primary source of communication with the collective unconscious. They are idealised impressions of the male and female, which emerge from the collective unconscious in dreams and inform our ideas of the opposite gender. Jung believed that psychological changes as well as social influences contributed to the development of sex roles and gender identities. The influences of the anima and animus archetypes were also involved in this process. The anima is the inner personality, the characteristic of the unconscious which is complementary to the conscious attitude (Persona). It is quite sentimental and contains all fallible human qualities that the conscious part lacks. Jung sees it as, "A very feminine woman has a masculine soul, and a very masculine man has a feminine soul. This contrast is due to the fact that a man is not in all things wholly masculine, but also has certain feminine traits" (444). The individual qualities of man can be associated with anima and is subjected to womanish weakness and receptiveness. It remains in unconscious until it is projected.

The Animus is the masculine image within a woman's psyche. Just as the male contains an anima within himself, a woman contains an animus within herself. According to Jung, "... [animus] it takes the form of a hidden sacred conviction. When such a conviction is preached with a loud, insistent, masculine voice or

imposed on others by means of brutal emotional scenes, the underlying masculinity in a woman is easily recognized” (Man 189). It personifies the masculine traits like courage, chivalry and so on.

The “persona” is the person’s ‘mask’, shown to the outer world and Jung describes it as the conformity archetype. It is not a literal mask, however. The persona represents all of the different social masks that we wear among various groups and situations. This mask helps him to disguise in order to meet the required standards of the society while keeping his conscious intentions. The persona archetype allows people to adapt to the world around them and fit within the society they live. It conceals the true intentions and nature of the individual. It acts to protect ego from negative images. As Jung sees, “The man who identifies with this mask I would call “personal” as opposed to individual” (442). According to Jung, the persona may appear in dreams and take different forms. Persona is intellectual in nature and it is the outer attitude of the individual. However, identifying too much with persona can lead to inner conflicts, which Jung claimed, could be resolved through individuation.

According to Jung, “everyone carries a shadow, and the less is embodied in the individual’s conscious life, it is” (Archetypes 214). This is the animal side of our personality, similar to id in Freudian terms. It is the source of both our creative and destructive energies. The shadow archetype is composed of the elements of ourselves that we consider to be negative. “Shadow, the inferior part of the personality, sum of all personal and psychic elements, because of their incompatibility with the chosen conscious attitude, are denied expression in life and therefore coalesce into a relatively autonomous ‘splinter personality’ with contrary tendencies in the unconscious” (284). It personifies everything that a person refuses to know about

himself. The encounter with the shadow plays a major role in the process of individuation.

This archetype is often described as the darker side of the psyche, representing wildness and chaos. It can appear in dreams or visions and can take a variety of forms. The shadow is an archetype that consists of the sex and life instincts. The shadow exists as part of the unconscious mind and is composed of repressed ideas, weaknesses, desires, instincts and shortcomings. It might include emotions such as envy, greed, prejudice, hate, and aggression. In the article *Carl Jung: Archetypes and Analytical Psychology* says that, "Taken in its deepest sense, the shadow is the invisible saurian tail that man still drags behind him. Carefully amputated, it becomes the healing serpent of the mysteries".

The self is an archetype which provides a sense of unity in experience. It represents the unified unconsciousness and consciousness of an individual. According to Jung, the ultimate aim of every individual is to achieve a state of selfhood. Self is created through the process of individuation, in which various personalities are integrated. This archetype describes the unified psyche as a whole. Jung describes that there are two different centres of personality. The ego is the centre of the consciousness and it is the self that lies at the centre of personality.

These archetypes are used in this project that seems effective to the detailed analysis. Jung said, "... there are as many archetypes as there typical situations in life"(99). Archetypes are symbolic elements containing aspects of workings of human life and mind. They are regarded as recurrent patterns that lead to the self realization process in myths. Archetypes are in fact same throughout the history in every culture and all over the world.

Chapter 3

Demythologizing the Myth

This chapter focuses on the breakdown of the ancient myth of Gandharva through the perspective of the heroine in the light of demythologization. The film *Gandharvakshethram* unveils the deconstructive measures taken up by the director to give a new dimension to the spectators. It is the mere illusion of the heroine about Gandharvan that leads her into the problematic life with her husband. This film creates a great blow to the so-called audience of the early twentieth century who were obsessed with the web of faith.

Demythologization, a term introduced by Rudolf Bultmann, refers to remove the mythological elements from religious writings. In the article *Demythologization*, It means “to divest of mythological forms in order to uncover the meaning underlying them”. According to Ferdinand de Saussure, everything is a signifying practise and there is an option to demythologize it. Demythologization revolves around the statement “language is not a reflection of reality; it is a construction of reality” (Demythologization). That is, the restructuring of a concept or ideology that has been set by the society resulting a change in the ‘reality’. When it comes to myths, Demythologization attempts to challenge the existing myths through new interpretations. This method can be effectively applied in the movie *Gandharvakshethram*.

Gandharvakshethram is an eccentric romantic movie which describes the story of a girl named Lakshmi (played by Sharada) who has grown up in a traditional high-class Hindu family. Her childhood plays a major role in the development of her selfhood. The Hindu practise of Sambandam ditched away Lakshmi and her brother

from their parents at a very young age. The loss of the mother also enhanced the pain of solitude within her. She was caressed by her grandmother (played by Kalamandalam Kalyanikutty Amma) all through her life. Lakshmi stays with her grandmother and a housemaid named Kunjukutti (played by KPAC Lalitha) in their traditional family house. Her brother Vasudevan (played by K.P. Ummer) went to Bombay for securing new job opportunities.

Grandmother is the most influential person who sows the seed of traditional beliefs and practises in Lakshmi. She told Lakshmi old stories of ghost (Yakshi) and Gandharvan and made her accustomed with the nearby snake groves (sarpakavu) and gandharva temple (gandharvakshethram) since childhood. These narratives unconsciously uprooted in the mind of Lakshmi and she curiously gathered various informations about their family histories. She is fully obsessed with the very thoughts surrounding the environment she lives in. Lakshmi can be related to the school of thought in Psychology called “Behaviourism” founded by John B Watson. Behaviourism is a theory of learning based on the idea that all behaviours are acquired through conditioning. It is developed from the famous theory of classical conditioning by Ivan Petrovich Pavlov. Conditioning occurs through interaction with the environment. “Behaviourists believe that our responses to environmental stimuli shape our actions”(Cherry). So Lakshmi is shaped with respect to the external environment to which she is exposed to.

The film opens with a song by the grandmother describing about their old traditions to Lakshmi and she literally imagining those circumstances accordingly. The gradual development of Lakshmi from an innocent child to a mature individual is shown from the initial scenes of the movie. She sees certain scary dreams of ghosts from the perceived stories. She is perhaps in an imaginative world fully immersed

with those thoughts. One day, Lakshmi with her grandmother visited the nearby groves(kavu) at night for lighting lamp. She felt a storm with a grand odour of flowers. Her grandmother says, “When Gandharvan comes, virgins experience the odour of deer musk and jasmine”(“gandharvan varumbozhe kanyagalkk kashooridem kodamullapoovintem okke gandham varum”). Suddenly she hears a song singing by a Gandharvan (played by Prem Nazir) and became flabbergasted by his appearance. Lakshmi could only see and hear him. She clarifies with her grandmother about the human appearance of the gandharvan. She became frightened by hearing the song again. The grandmother describes about the nature of gandharvan, “Gandharvan attracts beautiful women only. It is like entering into their body to build marital alliance with them. Gandharvan lures charming women with their music” (“Sundharigalaya sthregalil mathrame gandharvan aavasikku.Gandharvan shareerathill praveshikkugayanu.Gandharvan kanyakamare bharyamarayi sveekarikannanu avarude dhehathu aavasikkunath.Gnadharvan ishttamulla shtregale pattupadi mohippikum”)

Lakshmi became fascinated with the stories of gandharvan. She came to know a fact that, there were girls in their family who had gandharvan as their original husbands. As a beautiful charming lady of her youthful days, Lakshmi also longed for a gandharvan to be with her forever. She is confused whether gandharvan is in love with her or not. Her grandmother replies that, “You felt fragrance of jasmine and deer musk on lighting lamps at gandharva temple, isn’t it? From that moment, I hope gandharvan likes you” (“Nee gandharva kshethrathill vilakk vechappo ninakk kudamulla poovintem kashooridem gandham vannile? Appo thott enikk oru thonalu,gandharvanu nine ishttappettun”). Lakshmi was literally enthralled by this reply and she wished to have a life with the gandharvan. The grandmother says

another story of their relative who is impregnated by gandharvan. There is another woman character in their family named Nangeli who became a ghost after being with a gandharavn. At this time, Lakshmi was dreaming with Gandharvan followed by a song sequence. This is the first time in the movie where, Lakshmi and Gandharvan were seen close to each other. Her imagination takes her to an illusionary world with full of ecstatic dreams.

The grandmother asks her, “Lakshmi, are you dreaming?” (“Lakshmi, swapnam kanuvano mole”). This movie can be regarded as a film which gives importance to dreams. The plot line moves with respect to the dreamy state of the heroine. Lakshmi is an individual who is physically present in this world but her thoughts surpasses all material limits. Dreams are a kind of psychic activity which is related to unconscious. As Sigmund Freud mentions that “No dream- action can be imagined whose first beginning have not in some shape already passed through the mind during our waking hours in the form of wish, desire and impulse” (Freud 24). The actions in the dream are the extension of thoughts in our mind we wish for. Freud, believed the unconscious urges could not be expressed in waking life, they find expression in dreams. Thus dreams provides an important window into the collective unconscious and the symbols contain in dreams has a universal meaning. In the movie, there is a complex division between the dreamy state and that of the reality.

The grandmother makes necessary arrangements for the prevention of evil spirits from their family. Since Lakshmi is the victimised person, she is supposed to do all the activities related to it. So they arranged Gandharvan Thullal, a ritual prevailed in the traditional families related to the exorcism of supposed spirits. While performing this act, she sees gandharvan at their gate. The grandmother was very

interested to search proposals for the purpose of sambandham to Lakshmi. Lakshmi could not bear it and she refuses and says, “One Gandharvan often appears to me. So I don’t prefer this alliance. You have told me, one grandmother has impregnated by gandharvan” (“Oru gandharvan enikku prathyakshapedarund. Enikku ee sambanham venda. Ee tharavattile oru muthasshi gandharvanil ninnu garbhiniyayennu muthasshi paranjille”). Her grandmother advises her to be very cautious in the case of gandharvan.

Lakshmi, who is unconditionally in love with Gandharvan says to Kunjukuti, “I admire a shape in my mind, Kunjukutti. It has the fragrance of deer musk and identical to five metalled idol” (“Ente manasill njan mohikkuna oru roopamundu kunjukutti. Kasthrooriyude sugandhamullapanchaloha vigraham poleyulla oru roopam”). At that night, she felt the fragrance of flowers and wishes to walk outdoors. Kunjukutti refuses her intension and replies, “This is because of the fact that your grandmother imbued stories of gandharvan and ghost stories into your mind” (“Muthasshi ennum pidich aduthirithiyittu gandharvan kadhagalum yakshi kadhagalum okke paranj kelpikkunathanu ee kuzhappam”). So Kunjukutti realized grandmother has ignited the spark of gandharvan in her through the stories. On that night, she hears a song by Gandharvan and suddenly wakes up from the sleep. She was attracted by his appearance and forced to follow him. Followed by a song sequence, they spent that night together with utmost happiness. This is the scene in the movie which depicts the love making moments of the characters. They were literally enjoying each moments with a magical bond between them.

On the next morning, Lakshmi describes her last night experience to Kunjukutti, “I have no words to express the ways in which Gandharvan satisfied me” (“Ente Gandharvan enne ethellam vidhathilanu aanandhippichathenu enikku paranju

ariyikkan vayyadi”). Lakshmi is feeling very happy about those moments with Gandharvan and it’s a kind of miracle for her. Kunjukutti could not believe her and asks, “I am astonished to hear that you opened the door and walked away” (“Kutty kathagu thurannu erangi poyyen kettitt enikku adhisayam thonunnu”). Lakshmi replies curiously, “I’m also amazed. I slept under the palm tree near to groves when I was awake. There is no Gandharvan. Suddenly, I became scared and came back here” (“Ippo enikkum adhisayam thonunnu. Sherikkum oormyullappol njan kavinaduthulla panachottil kidakkugayayirunnu. Gandharvane kanunnila. Petten enikku bhayam thonni njan oodiponnu”). Lakshmi shows the fragrance of her hand towards Kunjukutti. Kunjukutti anxiously asks her, “My goodness, what is she telling about? What is happening around?” (“Eeswara ee kutty enthokkeyanee parayunnathu? Enthokkeyanee sambhavikkane entho?”). The narrations described by Lakshmi is beyond the thoughts of an ordinary individual. Everyone becomes astonished by seeing her abnormal behaviour.

Meanwhile her brother returned home with his friend Satheeshan (played by Madhu). Vasudevan decided the marriage of Lakshmi and Satheshan without the consent of the grandmother. Lakshmi initially resists herself from the marriage and spent a night with Gandharvan again. But she is forced to marry the modern man Satheeshan. On the day of marriage, the grandmother dies and they are about to sell the family property to be settled in Bombay. Lakshmi could not acknowledge the shifting from her native place to Bombay, because she was deeply rooted in that environment. On the eve of shifting, she goes to grove for lighting the lamp.

Kunjukutti asks her, “Not lighting gandharva temple today?”

(“Gandhravakshethrathainu vilakku vaikkunille?”). Lakshmi emotionally replies her,

“My Gandharvan went away the day I got married and lost my virginity. After that I

adorned hair with flowers, wrote my eyes and applied sandal paste but he didn't come"("Enne thali kettiya dhivasam, njan kanyagayallathaya divasam, ente gandharvan enne vittu poi. Pinne njan poo choodi, kannezhuthi, manjakkuri thottu, ente gandharvan vanilla").

Lakshmi along with Satheshan shifted to Bombay. They were leading a peaceful life. Though Lakshmi misses the serene atmosphere of her village, she was adapting to the modern city lifestyle. Satheshan was a loving and caring husband for her. She gradually became a modern wife for him. One day, Satheshan brought a new sari for his wife and she became frustrated on seeing a temple shaped design on it. Suddenly she went back to her olden days and yells out, "My Gandharvan, my gandharva temple"("Ente Gandharvan, ente gandharvakshethram"). Satheshan was shocked to see this unconscious behaviour of his wife. Lakshmi often wakes up during nights and experience the presence of Gandharvan over there. One day, she happened to hear the song of Gandharvan and cries out, "Gandharvan, my gandharvan, Gandharvan... Jasmine... Gandharvan..."("Gandharvan, ente Gandharvan, Gandharvan... Mullappu... Gandharvan..."). Satheshan was helpless on seeing the abnormal behaviours of his wife. Since he hails from a modern background, it was very difficult for him to comprehend the age old beliefs and practises. Gradually, their marital relationship starts falling apart.

Eight months after marriage, Lakshmi delivers a boy child. Satheshan gets confused and frustrated about the paternity of the child. Everyone mocks at him and he became totally insane. He asks Lakshmi about it and she confessed that the child is not theirs, "I delivered the baby of Gandharvan. That Gandharvan used to enter in my body. I felt fragrance of jasmine and deer musk on certain nights. Gandharvan attracts me with his music. I unconsciously fall asleep. He treats me as if like a wife. I will be

sleeping nearby our home or at gandharva temple when I am fully conscious” (“Njan prasavichath Gandharvante kunjineyannu. Aa Gandharvan ennil aavasikkumayirunnu. Chila rathrigalill enikku mullapoovintem kasthooriyudeyum gandham anubhavappedumayirumnu. Gandharvan pattu paadi enne mohippikkum. Njan ariyatathe urangi pogum. Gandharvan ennod oru barthavine pole perumarum. Sherikkum oorma varumbol njan tharavadinteyo, gandharvan kshethrathinteyo aduthu kidakkunundagum”). Satheshan fell into despair and shows his disinterest to accept the child.

He consulted a psychologist to know about the affected condition of his wife. The doctor says to him, “Your wife is a mental patient since childhood. The gandharvan temple and the snake groves around her home had created a different world in her subconscious mind” (“Ningalude bharya cheruppam muthale oru manasika roghi aayirikkanam. Gandharva kshethravum sarppakavumulla tharavattil valarnnathukondu avalude ubabhodha manasill prethegeha oru logham srushtichirikkanam”). The doctor connects her sleepwalks with the biological phenomenon somnambulism and advises Satheshan to care his wife. He has concern for Lakshmi but could not admit the child as his own. Lakshmi was caught up between her husband and the child. The child literally acts as a hindrance for their peaceful life. Lakshmi has to satisfy the needs of her husband and that of her baby.

One day, the child becomes ill and Lakshmi becomes very nervous and asks Satheshan to take the child to the hospital. But he refuses that and asks her to be with him to spend that night together. Lakshmi pleaded him to leave her alone. At last, she gathers the courage to resist him and decides to go to the hospital. She becomes bold enough to react and protect her baby at any cost. Satheshan asks her to leave his house for this act. Finally she with her baby goes to her native place after a long time.

She witnessed many changes around her family. Lakshmi with her son took refuge in Kunjooty's house. The child dies suffering from severe illness. Lakshmi becomes very depressed and yells outon seeing her baby dead.

Meanwhile Satheshan comes there to accept Lakshmi along with her son. He sees Lakshmi running after a boy and pursues them. Finally, they reach at the house of Gopalan, 'the Gandharavn' of Lakshmi. She was shocked to see him after a long time. The boy whom she followed is the son of Gopalan, a low caste man lived near to her house. This boy looks exactly similar to her withered son. Gopalan recollects his memories with Lakshmi for the past few years. Since he was not a privileged person to woo around Lakshmi, he sang songs to attract her. It was she who ran after him and fell in love with him. Its only in the climax of the film that Lakshmi realises it was she who misunderstood Gopalan as the Gandharvan. Gopalan is an ordinary man who cannot be regarded as a Gandharvan. She finally realises that the responsibility of all the struggles in her marital relationship lies on her shoulder. The film ends with the guilty and remorseful feelings of the heroine on perceiving him as an extraordinary individual.

The plotline of the film can be viewed through the perspective of the heroine with regard to the theory of collective unconscious. In Freud's psychoanalytic theory, the unconscious mind is a reservoir of feelings, thoughts, urges, and memories that outside of our conscious awareness. Most of the contents of the unconscious are feelings, namely pain, anxiety or conflict. "According to Freud, the unconscious continues to influence our behaviour and experience even though we are unaware of these underlying influences"(Cherry). In the film, the character Lakshmi lives in a fantasy world created within her imagination. She possessed certain conventional beliefs and had some strong but constrained convictions, which evolved from the

environment in which she grew. These repressed thoughts are excited in her from the stories told by the grandmother. She urged for a harmonious life with Gandharvan, the super hero image created in her mind. Lakshmi as an individual is unable to comprehend the reality that surrounded within.

Chapter 4

Demystifying the myth

Myths and epics always attract and fascinate both the readers and writers. Mythologies can be viewed through new contexts to come up with various meanings and interpretations. The emergence of contemporary theories also helps to interpret myths through different perspectives. Indian epics like Mahabharata and Ramayana have influenced the literary world through its retellings and translations. The purpose of reinterpretations is to bring into light different issues like gender, identity and patriarchy that deserve special attention. This chapter deals with the retelling of the Gandharva myth through the perspective of Gandharvan in the film *Njan Gandharvan* backed by a process called demystification. It is the process to obtain different interpretations without changing the structure of the content or plot of the literary item. The image of Gandharvan in the film unravels a different and new facet of his life from a male point of view. The film uses mythology to reciprocate the worth of Gandharvan through the narration.

The film is a fantastical account of a young girl Bhama (played by Suparna Anand) who was captivated by a statue, which later appears in the form of a Gandharvan. The plot line moves with the account of intense love relationship of the couple. When Bhama picks the statue from the shore during a trip, she is bewildered by the beauty of it. She is quite disturbed and it perturbs her sleep and goes on dreaming about it. According to Jung, “By psyche I understand the totality of all psychic processes, conscious as well as unconscious” (Psychological, 440). The psyche is related to the ways of the mind. The ‘power of illusion’ is deeply rooted in the psyche of the individuals. Jung focuses on the concept of existence of a being.

The inner soul of the heroine, now in an illusionary world wishes for a union with a being. Bhama as an individual bear a divided self; she is obliged to fulfil the demands of her family and has an urge to unite with Gandharvan. So, the attitude of the individual varies according to the circumstances.

On that same night accompanied by heavy storms, a Gandharvan appears in front of her from the statue. Bhama is stunned by his magical appearance. Suddenly, she is conquered by his kiss. The myth of Gandharvan she has been internalised took its form into meaning. As Roland Barthes says “The characterisation of myth is to transform a meaning into form” (55). Bhama has become mesmerised by the first experience with Gandharvan and back home immersed with his thoughts. The transformation of the heroine is clearly evident from the film. She gradually discovers the beauty in her when the grandma (played by Philomina) gifted her beautiful necklace. Her parents (played by M.G Soman and Sulakshana) also note the changes observed in her. Though she is a promising student in her academics, her thoughts started to flee with Gandharvan even in her study holidays.

The impact of collective unconscious is clearly visible in the character of Bhama. From the moment she got the statue, it enlightens the repressed thoughts about Gandharvan. Apart from this, family members play a crucial role for enhancing her cravings for him. They clear her queries regarding the lover and thus create a fantasy world within. The grandmother says,

Gandharvas are musicians of heaven. Women in heaven adore their music and beauty. They make affairs together. Finally God (devas) come to see it. They keep aside to warn the ladies and curse gandharvas. Go to earth and take refuge for centuries. They wander on

earth and get attracted to virgins. They fall in love with each other. Gandharvas go back to heaven when the curse period is over. The life of woman who had alliance with them is so pathetic(Gandharvanmaru swarghaloghathe pattukkaranu. Evarude pattilum soudharyatilokke devalogathe chila pennungal mayangum. Avaru chittikkali indakkum. Ath oduvill devedhrante kannil pedum. Appo angeru pennungale shasichu othukki nirthiyittu ivare shabikkum. Bhoomiyill poi ethrakodiyuganjalu allenghill ethramanushyajanmangalu alanjuthirinjunadanolan.Angane gandharvanmaru bhoomiyill vannu aaghashathode alanjuthirinju bhoomiyille chila pennungale nottamidum.Kanyaghamare mathre pullikkvandu. Angane nokkinokki ishtapedunna kanyamaroduothukoodi bandhamvekkum. Enittenda avarude samayamaavumbo avarangupogum. Ente mole gandharvankoodiya aa penintejeevidham pazhanu) (*NjanGandharvan*)

This is the general conception about Gandharvan exists in the collective unconscious of an individual. But this movie unveils the plights and struggles of Gandharvas in heaven. They are bounded with different tragic laws of heaven. There exists a law to forget their beloved once the requested period of relationship is over. So Gandharvan is portrayed as an ordinary individual who is in quest for love. He is fed up with the life in heaven and wish to live peacefully with his beloved on earth. As he says to his beloved,

I possess the mind of a contended traveller now. I wish to live and die here with you as an ordinary individual without the barriers of nights and laws. I love to live and die like a human not having any intensions

of a culprit. I wish to lie near your tomb somewhere in the earth. I only want this (Mathivanna sachariyude manasanuinneenteth.

Maduthirikkunu. Enikkuinievidemmathi. Evideodungiyalmathi., ninte oppum oru sadharana manushysnayi rathriyudeyum niyamathinteyum vilakkugalilathe. Kuttavaliyude pathungalum olichukaliyum

avasanippich manushyane pole jeevich marikkan kothithonugayanu.

Eebhoomiyude oridath ninte kuzhimadathinaduthu

ithirimannukandethi vishramikkan manasu mohikkugayannu.

Athumathrameinivendu. Satyam) (*NjanGandharvan*)

From this wish it is obvious about the strong desire he vests in his mind. Bhama kisses him followed by a beautiful song sequence. She is not at all bothered on the conceptions of others about her lover. She creates an illusionary world with her imaginations and thoughts of Gandharvan. Though they possess a magical love, fate doesn't permit them to be united on earth. Gandharvan has to leave his lover and go back to heaven. The movie ends with this tragic fate and the people could sympathize with Gandharvan in all aspects. The heroine found her celestial lover, only to be punished by higher powers.

With the encounter with the Gandharvan, Bhama the heroine is transformed into a new self who controls her every action. She hears a voice of the hero who takes the form of a butterfly saying that "I am Gandharvan who got the permission to see the earthly flowers and to experience the sweet nectar as if like a butterfly" (" eebhoomugathepookkalum, eebhoomiyudethenummadhuryavumnugharnnukazhiyananu mathikittiyaaroppiyayaoru varna shalabham, njangandharvan"). Suddenly he appears as a romantic hero with a group of butterflies and they fall in love with each other. He is only visible to her and promises to appear whenever she wishes for. As Jung says,

“The archetype is essentially an unconscious content that is altered by becoming conscious and being perceived, and it takes its colour from the individual consciousness in which it happens to appear”(22). Archetypes are experiences of the personal lives which appear active in dreams and fantasies. The couple in the movie share many lovely moments together. Gandharvan has sacrificed many laws of celestial world to please and entertain his lover. He has taken the form of a being to have a physical intimacy with her. Rebirth is an aspect of archetype accompanied by the transcendence of life which manifests the fateful transformations of godlike hero. It is regarded as a form of life ritually transformed through an independent process.

The hero myth is one of the best known and familiar myths in the world. The characteristic traits of the hero have influenced people of the entire world. The hero in general is courageous; brave hearted and does extraordinary deeds for the welfare of the entire humanity. In Jungian terms, the hero is a person who pursues a quest to realise his destiny. The hero meets with certain characters, events and obstacles on his quest. In the movie *Njan Gandharvan*, the journey of the god like hero can be interpreted from a different perspective.

To prove Gandharvan is an archetypal hero, the following Jungian archetypes are taken into account: The Anima, The Animus, The Persona and The Shadow and The Self

The anima in the character Gandharvan is the personification of his dual personality. It is the presence of this unconscious realm made him to fall in love with a beautiful woman on earth. He is obsessed with her; obliged to obey and respect her to enhance the beauty of their affair. He has violated different laws of Devalokha; and is aware about the awaiting consequences and punishments. But he is very fond of this relationship. Gandharvan is a sacrificing character who is vulnerable to the

environment outside him. As he says “I respect to agree your commands than the rules of heaven”(“Swarghathinte kalpanekkal nee parayunnathu anusarikkananu ipponnikk ishttam”). It is the presence of anima that causes a man to fall suddenly in love, when he sees a woman for the first time. The sentimental and emotional content of anima leads him to complexities and thereby leading to the tragic death.

The repression of feminine traits and inclinations naturally causes the contrary sexual characters to accumulate in the unconscious. So, the man falls in love with a woman who corresponds to his own unconscious femininity. In fact, he accepts his own feminine soul who projects the worst weakness. The collective image in the unconscious of man helps him to connect with the nature of woman. In the film, the Gandharvan has an unconditional love with the girl who possesses his own feminine soul image and he wishes to live in the earth with her as an ordinary man. He has done many things which are restricted for them, under the commandments of Bhama. He is compelled to do all those out of commitment. He finds that girls on earth are more beautiful than in heaven. He enjoys being a wanderer on earth though it is a punishment from Devas.

Bhama manifests the animus within her throughout the film. From the very beginning of the affair till the end of the film, she is courageous enough to withstand everything befall on them. She is not afraid to roam and spend nights with her lover. When her cousin Pratheep (played by K.B. Ganesh Kumar) catches them, she logically manages the situation as well. She tactfully introduces Gandharvan as a friend named Devan in front of her family members. Bhama doesn't want him to be invisible. She wants others to recognise him as a human being. She testifies and acknowledges his visibility in front of others in a restaurant scene. She clarifies the authenticity of the details heard about Gandharvan with himself. Finally, she is

fearless to lose her virginity, before her lover disappears forever from the earth. Her determination for him seems inexorable.

The Persona in the character Gandharvan influences him to transform into a romantic hero to woo around the beautiful heroine. He has gifted her stone, fixed on her necklace and asked her to kiss it to be with him whenever she wishes for. Although, he is conscious about his past and future renderings, enjoys the present state of a lover. He once says to Bhama, “We are restricted to give and take the love affection of a woman. We have to make them in control by the very first touch. They can be slaves, preys but must leave them alone to pursue another relationship. That is the condition or else we will be punished” (Oru pennine snehikan, oru penninte sneham vanganathinoninum njangalkkavagashamilla. Aadhya sparshathil thanne manushyasthreye keezhadakkikollanam. Adimagalakkam, irikalakkam, thondagumbol puthiyaira thediparannu poi kollanam. Anganepadullu, illeshikshayanu). He boasts himself in front of the family members of Bhama to cope with the circumstances. Since she hails from a well-educated family, he is forced to matchup with their standard. Though he has endured many harsh punishments in the heaven, he is strong enough to meet the ladylove again. He is personified as a dual personality. Jung writes, “He puts on a mask, which he knows is in keeping with his conscious intensions, while it also meets the requirements and fits the opinions of society, first one motive and then the other gaining the upper hand” (441).

The shadow manifested in Gandharvan is reflected during the fight scene with Pratheep. Pratheep, accompanied with another man attacks the hero in a shop. Initially, he is tensed and finds standstill and clueless to resist them. But in the course of time, he voraciously hits them back and wins the battle. He madly destroys the substances that belong to the shop. Here we could see another dark side of the hero

who is entirely different from that of a romantic lover. This particular antagonistic trait is repressed in him and it gets activated in favourable instances.

The self archetype is depicted through the realization of the true self of Gandharvan. It is the unified state of consciousness and unconsciousness of an individual. His quest for the love unravels the state of a true lover in him. He is willing to endure many sacrifices for his beloved. Towards the end of the film, Gandharvan along with the lover hear a voice from heaven heralding his last hours on earth. It warns about the awaiting brutal punishments as well. However, he decides to spend his last hours with the beloved to cherish the memories forever. Each moment in the earth is more valuable for him. As he says to his lover, “I wish to live here. Do you know why I came to your house today? It is because of my craving to be a human. I realised the sweetness of having relationships. I want to be a link in it. I will fulfil it...I will become human. I aspire to become a man named Devan on earth who lives and die with your everlasting thoughts”(Enikkuini ivide kazhinjalmathi. Njaninnu Bhamayude veettillvannathu enthinannuariyamo? Manushyanavannulla kothikondu...Bandhanjalude divyasouryabhyaminnu njanavidevecharinju. Enikkumathill oru kanniaavanam. Athunjansathikkum... Njanmanushyanavum. Eebhoomiyill ninte oppam jeevich ninte oormayumayi marikkuna Devan ennuperulla oru manushyanavum). Thus, he has turned out to be a true lover in all aspects.

Mythologies give space for archetypes. The famous anthropologist, Northrop Frye calls the search for archetypes as a kind of literary anthropology. The character Gandharvan can be considered as an archetypal hero in all aspects. “The central myth of all literature he identifies as the quest-myth, seen in four distinct phases that correspond to four aspects of cyclical recurrence” (Frye, 1). In the film, Gandharvan is a hero who is in search for love. Being a celestial being, his quest for love leads him

to the beautiful heroine and wins her heart. They have a magical chemistry which is inseparable. So, he cannot go to heaven (devalokha) leaving her on earth. They both wish to live together for the rest of their life. He is the symbol of love and sacrifice. He literally enjoys every moment on earth with his lover. He is enthralled by the beautiful ladies on earth. He mocks at the conception of devas and says, “They don’t know how beautiful the earth is. They fail to notice the charming ladies who are more gorgeous than their lovers”(“Adhamamennu avar dharichu vachirikkunna eebhoomi avarude swarghathekkal bhangiyullathanenu avarkkariyilla. Avarude absarasughalekkal bhangiyulla pennkuttigal ivideundennu avar manasilakkunilla”). Altogether, Gandharvan can be regarded as a compassionate and sensitive person for his lover.

Through this film, the director has attempted to give another interpretation about Gandharva through his own perspective. It reveals a true lover in him who wishes life on the earth with his beloved. The heroine is portrayed as a victim of collective unconscious and ardently longs for a life with Gandharvan. Hence, the film offers a demystified Gandharvan from a male point of view.

Chapter 5

Gandharvan: A Humanistic Soul

Our society has witnessed a plethora of transformations owing to the developments in many sectors. With the outbreak of Modernism and Postmodernism, our society became more interpretative and creative in a daily basis. People are coming with multiple retellings of narratives on different perspectives. Mythologies can also be viewed through this lens. Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni's *The Palace of Illusions*, Kavita Kane's *Sita's Sister and Karna's Wife* are some of the examples where myths have been explored through different perspectives. These interpretations appear to fuse together the mythological facts with reality to attract the mass towards their own culture and to give voice to the unvoiced.

Through this project, an attempt has been made to explore the different ways in which the gandharva myth is being portrayed in two films. It has reconstructed and deconstructed through the films *Njan Gandharvan* and *Gnadhavakshethram* respectively. Meenakshi Mukherjee in her essay "Myth as Technique" explains that there are two ways in which myth as technique has been used in fiction, one is "digressional technique" and other is using "structural parallels" (Dr. Kumari 3). These are the two techniques manifested in the analysis of these films. Digressional technique is related to demythologization in which the myth is fully breakdown in the film. On the other hand, structural parallel is similar to demystification through which myth is restructured in the film through another perspective. These two techniques constitute the levels of interpreting the same myth differently.

The heroines of the two films employ the theme of collective unconscious. They are shown as the victims of unconscious that develop the structure of the plot.

Collective unconscious is the structure that is shared among the beings of the same species. It is genetically inherited from an evolutionary past. The family members especially the grandmothers of both the films play a major role in shaping the thoughts of the heroines. They share different stories and facts about Gandharvan to create a fascination towards him. This later develops as a feeling of love delving them into imaginations and thoughts. Lakshmi and Bhama create their own illusionary world owing to the imaginations. Dreams play an extreme importance in their life. It is difficult to comprehend the world of reality and fantasy in the two films. The heroines have an inextricable relation with the Gandharvan in two films. Though they both wish ardently for a peaceful life with Gandharvan, it has ended as a futile attempt.

Gandharvan is a mythical character portrayed differently in the films. This project gives a humanist approach to this heroic soul. Both the films describe Gandharvan as an ordinary individual who is in love with the heroines. Gandharvan can be regarded as an evergreen romantic hero who attracts the most beautiful women. There is a constructed negative image in the minds of the people that, Gandharvan is a womanizer who leaves heaven leaving his beloved on earth. But it is their fate that doesn't permit a beautiful life on earth. They can be regarded as beings that deserve utmost empathy.

In the film *Gandharvakshethram*, the heroine is portrayed as an individual who is being caught up in between fantasy and reality. The director focuses on her imaginations and thoughts in order to breakdown the concept of Gandharva. She is obsessed with the traditional beliefs and practises of their family. The grandmother plays a major role in shaping her mind through different stories. It is her mistake to misunderstand an ordinary individual as Gandharvan which further lead to all the consequences. Lakshmi cannot be regarded as an ordinary individual because she is

unable to comprehend the reality of life. Through the climax of the film, the director deconstructs the so called Gandharva myth completely. Since this film was released during nineties it has effectively portrayed the demythologization of the existing mythic belief of Gandharva.

In this film, Gandharvan is a low born man named Gopalan which is revealed at the end of the film. He was in love with the heroine in his youth. He used to watch her from the outdoors because of his low birth. But due to the unconscious realm of her psyche, she believes him as a Gandharvan. They spend nights together and had a magical love between them. They didn't unite together in life as she was forced for another marriage. Towards the end of the film, she realises her Gandharvan as an ordinary man. The baby of Gandharvan is portrayed as the exact replica of her son. The film describes the tragic fate of lovers who could not be united on earth.

The film *Njan Gandharvan*, is analysed through the perspective of Gandharvan. Gandharvan is portrayed as an individual who wishes to live with his beloved on earth. He is regarded as an archetypal hero who is a revised version of the so-called typical hero in myths. He as a person describes his own struggles and desires to be fulfilled in life. The Gandharva myth is taken as a source for retelling from a different perspective. Padmarajan's portrayal of Gandharvan is more appealing because it unravels the archetypal myth and however narrates the sensitive part of him. The director has skilfully demystified the existing myth of Gandharva by focusing on the terrible fate of the god like hero from a male point of view. The film describes Gandharvan as a hero who is in search of love and finally realizes his true self. We could empathize with Gandharvan in every aspect because of his traumatic life. At the very end of the film, he refused to go back to heaven to resume his magical love on earth. But unfortunately, he goes back creating catharsis in the mind

of the audience. This image unleashes a different and new facet of Gandhravan's life. The film personalizes the myth and gives a sensible and lifelike portrayal of Gandharvan. In fact, this film gives a humanistic approach to the hero Gandharvan.

In this film, the heroine Bhama plays a major role in developing a love relationship with Gandharvan. They fell in love at the first sight. It is through her he discovers his true self of a lover. Bhama didn't want to break the relationship as she is aware about the tragic fate of her lover. She is bold enough to stand with him till his last moment on earth. She courageously fights against all the odds in this journey. There existed a magical bond of love between them and this forced him to spend the last moments with his lover in spite of his awaiting punishments.

This project concludes that through the process of demythologization and demystification, the Gandharva myth has interpreted differently in the two films. Gandharvan is given a humanistic approach through the films and viewed from the lens of reality. The heroines are typical examples of collective unconscious who are creators of their own illusions. Though these films were released during nineties the portrayal of Gandharva myth seems extremely different.

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