The Relevance and Impact of Myths on Contemporary Gaming Culture

*1Dr. Anupama Sabhapathy

*1Associate Professor, Department of English, Government First Grade College, Madikeri, Kodagu, Karnataka, India.

Abstract
Myths are understood as symbolic and functional narratives in Literature with interplays of characters and situations that transcend factual realities and set in supernatural realms of wonder, magic and fiction. Several genres of Literature have their foundations in myths. Traditionally, myths, folklore and legends have a common overlapping structure, however, myths have evolved into a genre of their own, distancing themselves from fairy-tales and having a strong presence of personalities who symbolise gods, demi-gods or supernatural creations. These may obviously not be true stories and may have controversial elements. Yet, in the contemporary, digital context, myths have gained profound popularity in the gaming cultures. Fiction and fantasies have blurred boundaries with realities, merging digital phenomena with narratives of yore. These gaming cultures have emerged as huge industries and institutions by themselves, setting trends and creating pathways for new modes of entertainment and generational values.

Keywords: Myths, gaming cultures, fiction, legends, folk-lore, digital technology, generational evolution.

Introduction
Technically speaking, myths are defined by scholars of the West that "describe the actions of the other-worldly in terms of this world" [1]. Histories of various cultures have revealed that myths have served as the foundational structures, shaping civilisations. Even in an era of digital and technical predominance, myths have not gone out of time, on the contrary, have been revived and reinterpreted making their relevance stronger through a fascinating intertwining of fictitious story-telling with super-natural protagonists and antagonists, creating a new era of digital entertainment in the contemporary context. Digital gaming cultures have shaped and transformed the cultural values across generations, and yet successfully attained a continuum with ancient legendary myths across all cultures. Cultural divisions are getting dissolved contributing a global phenomenon of gaming cultures, reliving the mythical pasts in the 21st century digital world. Myths have continued to have their impact on the urban cultures inspite of civilizational and generational gaps. Cultural values are naturalised and globalised in the gaming realms. As Rolland Barthes states, the dominant aspects of individual cultures are either integrated or dissolved, thus dissolving the "complexity of human acts." [2]. Myth narratives have transformed from being oral traditions of folk-lores and legends to written forms expressed in various art forms. The digital world today has adapted the centuries-old myths to create innovative and immersive gaming experiences through the internet, bringing together an interactive young digital generation, that transcends cultural limitations.

Digital gamers have become instruments of global change through their active participation and dissemination of gaming ideologies. Plots and characterisations are still being inspired by ancient myths of popular cultures, predominantly, Greek. The gaming models are no more platforms of entertainment and fun, but establishing themselves as giant industries with the latest versions of games that are competing with the regular modes of popular entertainment. Digital games or the online gaming cultures have invaded the traditional arts and entertainment arenas and created a niche as the most dominating investment in the businesses today. Myths and technology have woven the structures of modern gaming dynamics, blending curiosity among the gamers, interacting and sensitizing themselves with cross-cultural set ups and transforming virtual artistic expressions into realistic experiences. The mythical worlds have successfully impacted the gamers to appreciate and appropriate the cultural differences, ensuring that the gamers respect and honour the characters and values of various cultures. This reshaping of global values among the contemporary generations has undoubtedly "enriched cultural values, besides fostering the preservation and continuation of the ancient myths in a digital era [3].

The world of gaming cultures features around myths, prominently, Greek, Norse, Egyptian etc. The fantasy world is inspired and populated with gods, monsters and heroes in impressive digital, graphical settings of supernatural beings and characters on an adventurous journey. The clash of the characters follows patterns of traditional morals, thus achieving a continuum of values and morality with

contemporary relevance. The intertwining of art, plot, adventure and a fascinating narrative in a fantasy world creates a magical experience to the gamers. Games are fused with emotions as the plot directly translates the mythological archetypes to gaming characters, bringing into fray the repertoire of human emotions. The themes of the games are founded on lofty destinations, interventions of divine beings and epic journeys of the heroes against formidable challenges, giving the game a solid structure of adventure and deep involvement into the narrative. Digital gaming culture achieves a unique connection between the myths and the technological choices available that the gaming culture is forging ahead with creating its independent myth-making ventures. Gamers/players are not passive audiences but active participants who are allowed to interact, direct and decide the course of the game through their characteristic identities related to the theme. The interaction of the players binds them emotionally, giving each of them a shared feeling of being in the game, with a sense of identity and worth.

What started as a small game has now grown into its full-size proportion of a beaming commercial industry, creating a new terminology in the digital language, 'the gamers'. Far from being casual gamers, they have now transformed as 'passionate enthusiasts and professional gaming competitors" [4]. The gaming culture, at present enjoys global popularity with particular impact on adults, adolescents and even more, female players. The gaming culture has evolved further with sophisticated themes, plots, characters and players wherein the internet plays a pivotal role in significantly engaging and involving major gamers. It has, despite the criticism that gaming culture has induced negative performance levels and decreased emotional management, the other aspects of acceptance include sharp cognitive recognition and abilities, enhanced coordination between analytical thinking, observation and motor abilities in the players. Games are devised with creatures and characters from myths and the history of the gaming culture validates this although, there are numerous games not relying on mythical legends or characters.

The significance of myths in games is the connect and adventurous temperament discovered by players in them. Most of all classical myths are centred on the protagonist's adventure, discovery of exotic places and people which interest the contemporary gamers for its sheer grandiosity and fantasy. Some of the most popular games that have artistically blended myths and legends are: God of War, Hades, The Witcher 3, Skyrim, Assassin's Creed, Titan Quest and others. These games have drawn prolifically from the Greek, Norse and other pantheistic cultures in the creation of epic adventures and wars and heroic battles. Folk-lore and literature of the classical age, based on books continue the tradition of blending mythology and the digital platforms of games. What captivates and engages players to draw from myths and classics is the feasibility of the players being agents to revive the characters into the gaming field. This active life-like involvement of the classical mythical characters, supported by stunning visuals and a captivating narrative explores infinite possibilities to the gamers in keeping the game move on. The mythical characters are customized to relate to the grand theme and settings of the play with modern instruments and weapons of combat.

The most fascinating truth of the gaming culture is the fact that modern readers who have lost the connect with the legendary heroes and mythical creatures are brought back to life, adapted to the strategic requirements of the game.

Forgotten and unheard tales are inspired with fresh symbols and powers, transforming the visual appeal and the thematic content into stronger realms of the game. Games adapted through classical books are one of the most lucrative assignments taken up recently. Language depth, gaming interactivity and the empowerment achieved by the gamers emphasizes the huge reliability on books of mythical content. Books provide and open access to the players' creativity, investing the characters with extra powers or diminishing the powers of the mythical characters. Cultures across the world have all created their imprints on the digital gaming arenas making the gaming platform one of the most glamorized and giant industries in the contemporary world.

Games like Pokemon series, The Witcher, multiplayer game-Lord of the Rings have had a tremendous following impact the players worldwide. Harry Potter's visual adaptation was one of the magical things to have ever happened centering around myths and mystery. https://dmggamingpodcast.com. Top Games inspired by Folklore. Greek mythology continues to inspire and lead all gamers, right from the casual ones to the hard-core gamers. God of War is an epic saga, with unmatched intensity and visual treat that recreates the Greece of Odysseus. Haedes is another myth-based game that deals with the underworld and packed with rich dialogue and settings of a dark theme. Immortals is a horror-based adventure, full of riddles and encounters with Gods and deities.

This huge landscape of digital game culture is an industry that invests billions, with the fever of the game culture so pronounced that Digital Games have made their presence to the Game Awards of the year. These games played on various platforms have their competitive scores and play time crossing several hundreds of hours. Astro Bot, Baldur' Gate 3, Blue Prince and finally Clair Obscure Expedition 33, set in France is a "multi-award role playing adventure with astonishing style and genuine emotional weight." [5]

Thus, the gaming industry has emerged as a massive, global entertainment sector fundamentally based on tech-innovations, dominating the economic arena in recent times. Indian gamers constitute an impressive population of gamers, contributing to billions of dollars in the projects. Indian gamers have a strong mobile presence, with over 90% playing on their smart phones. Gaming, which was a minor stream of entertainment and business has now become a central cultural and entertainment force to reckon with. Once considered a s a 'leisure sector' it now encompasses technical design, international market, distribution, monetization and a huge consumption., generating jobs and moving ahead as a major professional industry gathering increased relevance and making a profound contemporary impact. Its mainstream predominance with multi-player applications has transformed it from being a game to a giant profession. This growing gamer demographic trends is a compass to the future of the gaming industry. It is predicted that there are 174 million players in America alone, growing up with Play Stations, X boxes and Game Cubes and in India, it is a whopping 500 million, making it the world's largest by user base and a global leader in gaming app downloads. This boom is due to the affordability of mobile phones and better internet infrastructure extending beyond urban centres. This has attracted major domestic and foreign investors to establish their development centres in India. The gaming industry has virtually become a multi-billion dollars powerhouse of investment and business landscape, each Indian gamer spending an average of 10-12 hours per week. India does not

< 27 >

have any significant game development studios inspite of its impressive number of gamers. Ubisoft and Microsoft Games have made their entries felt and the future of the development of centres relies on the regulations of the Government.

Indian mythology will be a rich contributor to the characters and stories, providing an instant connect with the gamers due to its deeply ingrained local culture. Indian epics have vast reservoirs of tales and characters from gods to demons and spirits. Perfect for the game mechanics. Indian art and architecture have an essence of their own that demonstrates in the visual appeal of the game, making it aesthetic and stunningly artistic. The future of the gaming culture in India holds good opportunities with most Indian engineers entering the field. Indian mythology has an endless plethora of personalities in the epics providing a fertile ground for the creation of unique, classical, engaging and a culturally rich thematic perception of the gaming scenario that resonates locally and globally.

References
1. https./en.Wikipedia.org. *Myth*
2. Barthes, Roland. 1993. *Mythologies*. Translated by Annette Lavers. London. Vintage. coupe. Laurence. 2009. *Myth*. London; Routledge. Pg. 156.
3. *Ancient Myths and Modern Gaming: Connecting History and Technology* 2025 CAL INFO https.//calinfo.in.
4. https.//en.wikipedia.org. *Video Game Culture*
5. https.//www.guardian.com. *The 15 Best PS5 games to play in 2026*.

< 28 >