



Register Number:
Date:

ST. JOSEPH'S COLLEGE (AUTONOMOUS), BENGALURU - 27
ADDITIONAL ENGLISH B.A/ B. Sc/ B.Com/ B.S.W - II SEMESTER
SEMESTER EXAMINATION: APRIL 2018
AE 214 - ADDITIONAL ENGLISH

Time: 2 ½ Hours

Max. Marks: 70

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. You are allowed to use a dictionary.
2. This paper contains **FOUR** printed pages and two sections.
3. You will lose marks for exceeding the word limit.

SECTION - A

I. Answer ANY THREE of the following questions in about 150 words:

(3 x 10 = 30)

1. "In Dickens' vision, humanity is inseparable from divinity, and each soul progresses toward eternity by understanding that. And that is a vision that resonates far beyond a single day or a single creed." Discuss this statement in light of Charles Dickens' novels *A Christmas Carol* and *Oliver Twist*.
2. The Jarndyce and Jarndyce lawsuit serves as an allegory. Explain how Charles Dickens' novels criticise the legal system of Victorian Era by drawing specific examples from your reading of his novels this semester.
3. Charles Dickens' most memorable novels fall into the category of the bildungsroman, a popular form of novel in the nineteenth century. Discuss how Dickens' novels fit into the genre by drawing examples from your readings.
4. "Antigone believes that a woman's duty is not to the men who rule a domain, but rather to her own instincts and her own sense of right and wrong." What does this tell us about Antigone as a character? How is her opinion contrasted to her sister Ismene's in Sophocles' play *Antigone*?
5. If you were a citizen of Thebes, who would you side with - Creon (to leave Polyneices' corpse to rot on the field of battle) or Antigone (to honor Polyneices' body with burial)? Justify your stand using instances from *Antigone*.

SECTION - B

II. Read the following except from the article titled, 'Ancient Mythology in Modern Avatars', by Swati Daftuar, published in *The Hindu* and answer the questions that follow.

There are scattered indicators — popular guest appearances by Chhota Bheem at birthday parties for giddy 10-year-olds, headlines that announce *Baahubali's* roaring, thumping box office success; over four million YouTube views and counting for Sujoy Ghosh's short film, *Ahalya*; the indisputable place of honour that Amish Tripathi's *Shiva Trilogy* has in almost every bookstore in the country, and finally, the eagerness with which each of these is discussed, analysed, criticised and praised, but never ignored. Scattered, yes, but these indicators are also connected in a way that seems to indicate that once again there is a wave of creators and consumers dipping into the rich well of Hindu mythology that never seems to run dry.

It is necessary to say "once again" because there have been definite precedents. Hindu mythology has, over time, continued to remain a favoured trope across mediums and genres in Indian popular culture. Impossible to forget *Raja Harishchandra*, the first full-length feature film that gave birth to Indian cinema; equally impossible to forget the mass obsession that was Doordarshan's *Mahabharata*, or the literary masterpiece that was Ramdhari Singh Dinkar's *Rashmirathi*. "I think that the mythology genre has always been the most popular genre in India. This is especially true of books published in Indian languages like Hindi, Tamil, Kannada, Telugu, Marathi, Malayalam, Gujarati, Bengali, besides others," says author Amish Tripathi. "The seed of myth is the archetype, the myths condense the very meaning of existence," says Professor Susan Visvanathan, Chairperson and Professor at the Sociology, Centre for the Study of Social Systems, School of Social Sciences, Jawaharlal Nehru University, Delhi.

What then is different today? Every age comes with its own interpretations and approach, as does ours. The narrative that defines us, or at least an aspect of us, lies within this approach. Today, as we see publishers with long, seemingly unending list of mythological fiction and popular TV shows and movies revolving around characters from our epics, we find that while our original source might be the same as the one used by those in the past, both our approach to it and the way we consume this genre has changed, with characteristics unique to our times.

To begin with, in literature the shift has been a very prominent and obvious one. Tripathi expands on his statement about the mythology genre in regional languages and says that till recently, not too many books of this genre were published in English in India. But what is good now is that today the genre has become popular in English as well. The last 10-15 years have seen the emergence of a larger group of people who did not grow up with English as a first language and are therefore more comfortable with writers who write English using a more Indian idiom. The themes that these writers tackle also appeal to the aspirations and interests of this emerging demographic. These authors sell far in excess to the earlier wave of Indian writers. Interestingly their works work well when translated into various Indian languages.

The next, and perhaps the most telling, characteristic is our need for a hero, along with the story. Mythologist and best-selling author Devdutt Pattanaik says that he finds this particular phenomenon fascinating. "I find many Indian mythologies being approached using Western heroic structures. (It) indicates how we have become so westernised that we don't realise what

we consider universal is actually rooted in Greek and Abrahamic myths, which is why we seek heroes and villains and martyrs even in Hindu stories that follow a very different non-linear cyclical structure.” Pattanaik’s observation holds true when we look at most mythological fiction, movies and television shows. In *Sankatmochan Mahabali Hanumaan*, an Indian television show that airs on Sony Entertainment Television, we see a larger than life titular character. In Arjun: *The Warrior Prince*, a 2012 Indian animated film, one Pandava brother becomes the hero of a story that was, originally, a multicast affair. Whether it is the Shiva of Tripathi’s trilogy or *Baahubali*’s Shivudu, we seem intent on finding ourselves our own mythological hero.

As some look for saviours, others seem to be delving into the grey areas in our myths, and it seems that the stories we grew up with can be dissected and analysed, and are not, indeed, sacrosanct. Today, more than ever, there seems to be a surge in books, movies and art that analyse episodes and epics in Hindu mythology, reading it from a contemporary perspective, and deriving from it meaning that was previously unexplored. Artist Moyna Chitrakar and author Samhita Arni explore Ramayana from Rama’s abandoned queen’s perspective in their graphic novel, *Sita’s Ramayana*, while Sujoy Ghosh’s *Ahalya* turns the story of Sage Gautama’s wife on its head, weaving in strains of sexuality and feminism. These, and several other instances of creative reinterpretation of Hindu myths, are supplemented by an increase in dialogue and critical analyses by readers, thinkers and academics themselves.

This aspect perhaps ties up with *Campfire*’s director Girija Jhunjunwala’s perspective. *Campfire* publishes graphic novels and its mythology genre list is a long one. “The probable reason for this resurgence, so to speak, is the universal appeal of the character’s journey that is being retold in these newer versions. Changing the mode of narration—from the universal to an individual’s point of view—and bringing out the human side of these god-like characters has changed the readers’/viewers’ way of looking at them. These characters possess all human emotions including the baser ones. They fight, they bleed and their actions are not always driven by a higher purpose. These are some things that every person can relate to.” Relate to, and indeed, scrutinise. The epics themselves have been reinterpreted in a way that makes them more human and less godly. We find ourselves questioning storylines, picking holes and critiquing characters, connecting them with contemporary ideas and issues. Of the epic, Visvanathan says, “It is therefore the most novelistic form, and it combines post-modern interpretations quite comfortably without ever completing the story.”

Jhunjunwala’s observation also relates to another important point — that of fictionalising mythology. Pattanaik, who has been writing now for 20 years, explains the difference between the study of mythology, and mythological fiction. “Mythology is subjective truth of a people transmitted in sacred stories, while mythic fiction is about reframing or rearguing or reimagining old stories to suit contemporary needs.” He adds that he’s seen a rise in mythological fiction of late. “It is essentially great fiction but with a foot in India’s mythic tradition.” Jhunjunwala, speaking from the perspective of a publishing house that specialises in graphic novels, says that mythological content offers great raw material to an artist. “As most of these stories are based on quasi-truths or complete myths, the artist’s mind is free to imagine any world that he likes! At the end of the day, it is his vision that reader sees. The artist’s vision enables the reader to view a whole other world. This enhanced visual reading is also a big reason behind why the genre of mythology is doing well, especially in the case of graphic novels.” The already rich, multidimensional content of Hindu mythology has become the blueprint for many new stories ...

Answer the following questions in about 200 words each:

(2 x 15 = 30)

6. "Changing the mode of narration—from the universal to an individual's point-of-view and bringing out the human side of these god-like characters has changed the readers'/viewers' way of looking at them." Do you agree with this statement? Discuss how R. K. Narayan and C. Rajagopalachari bring this in through their narratives of *Ramayana* and *Mahabharata*.
7. "The next, and perhaps the most telling, characteristic is our need for a hero, along with the story." Discuss how R. K. Narayan and C. Rajagopalachari redefine the notion of hero through Ravana, Bhima and Indra in their retelling of *Ramayana* and *Mahabharata*.

III. Read the comic strip given below and answer the question that follows:

(1 x 10 = 10)



Panel 1 – YOU KNOW, HOT CHOCOLATE, YOU'RE SCARED OF THE UNKNOWN, SO YOU NEVER TRY THINGS, SO THINGS STAY UNKNOWN, AND YOU STAY SCARED OF IT ALL.

Panel 2 – IT'S CALLED SELF-FULFILLING PROPHECY ...

Panel 3 – Well ... whatever it's called ...

Panel 4 – It's a system that works.

8. How do you understand Self-fulfilling prophecy? To what extent do you think this concept applies to Oedipus and Jocasta? Elaborate your answer by drawing examples from your reading of Sophocles' plays.