



DATE: 25-10-2017 (9AM)

**ST. JOSEPH'S COLLEGE (AUTONOMOUS) BANGALORE**  
**III SEMESTER GENERAL ENGLISH (BCA/BVC) - OCTOBER 2017**  
**MEDIA, CULTURE & TECHNOLOGY (GE 315)**  
(For supplementary students of 2015 batch only)

Do not write the register number on the question paper

Please attach the question paper along with the answer script.



**TIME: 2 hrs**

**MAX MARKS: 70**

**INSTRUCTIONS**

*This booklet contains question papers for both MCT A and MCT B sections.  
Answer questions according to the section you have been assigned to.  
You will lose marks for exceeding the suggested word limits.  
You are allowed to use a dictionary.*

**THIS PAPER CONTAINS SIX PRINTED PAGES AND TWO PARTS**

**For students of III Semester MCT A**

- I. The following is an excerpt from an essay titled *Drama Queens: Why It's All About Women and Power on Screen Right Now* published in The Guardian. Read it carefully and answer the questions below.**

Fictions set in alternative realities have enjoyed huge popularity recently, which is perhaps unsurprising in a post-truth world. For the last decade or so, Hollywood appeared to have almost given up producing any film that was not about a comic book superhero fighting a CGI apocalypse: Thor, The Incredible Hulk, Captain America, Iron Man, Superman, Batman, Spider-Man, X-Men, even Ant-Man. Some might wonder if Hollywood was over-compensating: if you want to know what a crisis in popular masculinity looks like, look no further than all those super, super men.

The most realistic part of superhero movies, in fact, is that all the power is generally in the hands of white men; physical laws might get overturned, but not political ones. Gradually, however, women are pushing their way into the cultural story on terms other than those defined by men. Last summer brought an all-female Ghostbusters, followed this summer by Wonder Woman, who leapt off a cliff and landed squarely, bow drawn, in the centre of this masculine ground. From The Hunger Games to Game of Thrones, audiences have demonstrated a growing appetite for allegorical stories about women with political and moral authority: after more than 50 years and 12 incarnations, even Doctor Who's Doctor is finally about to become a woman.

Superhero movies are conspicuously fables about power: they are preoccupied with its sources, how to control it, how to justify it. They are the fantasies of superpowers. What made Wonder Woman seem so different, and such a pleasure to so many viewers, was that its story remained focused throughout on the question of women's relationship to power. Made by and starring women, the film has been a global blockbuster, giving the franchise commercial power, which is the only kind Hollywood pays attention to; but the film itself has provoked a debate over what this allegory of female power is actually saying. Meanwhile, one of the year's most-discussed television series was

MCT-315-A-17

also about women and power, albeit in a far less celebratory mode. And now Game of Thrones, which is equally interested in women and power, has finally premiered its seventh series to its tenterhooked fans. Challenging power is itself a liberal, anti-authoritarian act, which means that power's answer is much less important than the act of posing the question, because that's what speaking truth to power looks like.

**I.A. Answer the following questions in 100 – 150 words. (3x10=30)**

1. "The most realistic part of superhero movies, in fact, is that all the power is generally in the hands of white men; physical laws might get overturned, but not political ones." Comment.
2. What does the author mean by 'that's what speaking truth to power looks like'? Are truth and power different things in films? Substantiate with examples from films that you have watched.
3. Which was the last Indian film you watched that had, in the author's terms, a 'powerful' woman?

**II.A. Write about a discussion in your MGT class that you found challenging. Explain your choice in 150- 200 words. (1x10=10)**

**B. Read the following article published in Live Mint and answer the questions below.**

Why India watches 'Naagin' - Shuchi Bansal

A couple of weeks ago, a middle-class family in Lucknow was in mourning having lost their 45-year-old son that morning. The mood in the house was sombre as friends and family had gathered to grieve over the loss. But as the clock struck eight that evening, two members of the family couldn't resist stealing a moment to watch their favourite television show Naagin.

Behind closed doors, the mother-daughter duo, who had arrived from a small town near Lucknow, was glued to the small screen for an hour watching Naagin at low volume much to the horror of the rest of the family.

Needless to say, it is devoted audience such as this that has catapulted Naagin to the number one show on Hindi general entertainment channels (GECs). The serial on the snake-woman has audiences in the Hindi-speaking markets hooked, making it the most-watched show on Hindi GECs.

Telecast on Colors every weekend (Saturday and Sunday), it had a total viewership of 19.8 million during the 2-8 January week, according to BARC India ratings. This was way ahead of its immediate competitor—Kumkum Bhagya on Zee TV that runs from Monday to Saturday.

With the captivating story of icchhadhari naagins (female snakes who can take human form at will), Ekta Kapoor, the promoter of Balaji Telefilms that has produced the show, has got her mojo back.

Together with the Colors programming team, she has once again cast her magic spell, similar to the one that had pushed Star Plus to the top rank 15 years ago.

Today, Colors is the number one Hindi entertainment channel and it has been so in both the urban and rural markets for the last four weeks. Raj Nayak, chief executive of Colors, admits that Naagin has a big role to play in driving the channel to the top slot.

Scheduling the show on the weekend was also a bold initiative as most channels maintain that weekend fiction doesn't fare well on GECs.

Why Naagin is a stupendous success is easy to see. First, Colors could not have picked a story with greater mass appeal than one of icchhadhari naagins. Besides, the story itself is intriguing, with all the elements—revenge, love, hate and suspense—required for a potboiler thrown in. The plot has two naagins who are out to avenge their parents' murder. It is the Indian housewife's Twilight Zone, says Mythili Chandrasekar, national planning director at J Walter Thompson in Delhi. (A psychological thriller, The Twilight Zone was an American television drama series comprising science fiction and fantasy.)

To be sure, the snake is a deep-rooted symbol in the country's mythology and currently Indian television is swarming with mythological tales—be it Siya Ke Ram, Sankatmochan Mahabali Hanuman or Santoshi Maa. In the past, cinema has also presented snake-based stories as a concoction of folklore, horror and emotional drama. Himesh Mahotra's 1986 film Nagina, featuring Sridevi and Rishi Kapoor, was a blockbuster hit. While most serials on Hindi television are all about family politics, in Naagin mythology meets family politics meets The Vampire Diaries!

Clearly, there is an element of mystery and curiosity attached to stories of icchhadhari naagins. While most of us have grown up watching, listening to or reading such stories, media magnifies such ideas, making people watch the serials with greater excitement. That is not all. According to Sanjay Chugh, a senior consultant psychiatrist, revenge, hate, jealousy, cruelty and aggression are some emotions that people often suppress as it is considered "wrong" to feel them, let alone express them. "TV shows where actors display these 'prohibited' emotions so blatantly, perhaps serve as an outlet for us to give way to those feelings. That's why people probably get glued to them," he says.

**I.B. Answer the following questions in 150-200 words. (2x15=30)**

1. Power seems to be the common theme between Superhero films and Indian films based on mythology. Or are they entirely different? Comment using examples from the article above.
2. How does the Lucknow family mentioned in the beginning add to the reading of this article? Give an account of other such TV show addiction stories that you may have heard and/or experienced.

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