



Register Number:  
Date: 25-10-2019

**ST. JOSEPH'S COLLEGE (AUTONOMOUS), BANGALORE-27  
V SEMESTER BA-EJP: END-SEMESTER EXAMINATION: OCTOBER 2019  
WRITING FOR JOURNALISM & CREATIVE WRITING  
JN 5315- ARTS & CULTURE JOURNALISM**

**Time- 2 ½ HOURS**

**Max Marks- 70**

**Instructions:**

- 1. This paper has THREE SECTIONS and THREE printed pages.**
- 2. This paper is for the V Semester Journalism students who have opted for the Arts & Culture Elective.**
- 3. You are allowed to use a dictionary.**

**A. The following are extracts taken from different essays/biographies of Pauline Kael.**

Her reviews invite you into conversation, so if you fall in love with her work, you feel you become a part of it. An anecdote from *A Life in the Dark* about how Kael got her start as a movie critic expresses this the best. She was sitting in a Berkeley coffee house in 1952, arguing with a friend about a movie they'd just seen, when Peter D. Martin, the editor of the recently launched *City Lights*, came over to their table. He'd been eavesdropping on their conversation. Impressed, he offered Kael a reviewing assignment on the spot. (It was Charlie Chaplin's *Limelight*.)

In a way, Kael never left the coffee house: more people just started listening in. It's not that her reviews come across as private reflections; it's precisely the contrary, that her critical sensibility was enlarged for an audience even before she had one. Her work never lost that conversational edge, but neither did it pander to her listeners or her readers: she expected them to follow her, to fight back. Kael brought the coffee house into the movie theater, and in doing so brought a new dimension to the American movie going experience.

Her essays, fiercely present in the moment and epic in length, buttonholed readers so they'd feel as if they were sitting next to her in the dark, seeing every-thing she saw. She fired up her exultantly vernacular American prose as if she were writing high-octane fiction, not passing judgment on "Cabaret."

Kael later explained her writing style: "I worked to loosen my style—to get away from the term-paper pomposity that we learn at college. I wanted the sentences to breathe, to have the sound of a human voice."

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

- 1. What does it mean to "bring a coffee house into a movie theater"? Give an example from a Pauline Kael review to demonstrate how she does it.**

2. If someone says that your review reads like a short-story – would you take that as a compliment or an insult? Explain. What can Arts and Culture journalists learn about developing ‘a human voice’ from Pauline Kael?

**B. What has been the most rewarding learning experience from your Arts and Culture classes this semester? Write in 100-150 words.(10 marks)**

**C. Read the following extract from an essay on Kanji.**

Have you ever said someone is as nutty as a fruitcake? It's a relatively recent Americanism, and one that I have had mixed feelings about for far too long. As mixed as my feelings towards fruitcake. Food-based insults in English, I have noticed, do tend to land rather imperfectly. Take that line that confused me for years — What am I, chopped liver? I get that the speaker is an aggrieved party but I love chopped liver, and have never understood how one could compare its rich, fatty perfection to feeling like your luminousness is being dimmed.

Many years ago, I passed by a fancy bakery that had sprung in my Delhi neighbourhood, saw that its name was Whipped and a puritan gasp escaped me. How wrong yet how daring, I thought. Their cakes tasted better because I assumed an evil mind was somewhere churning the butter. Was that the intended effect? Who is to say? But the gastronomic insult that has always and consistently failed for me is one in Malayalam: kanji. As in, “Avanoru kanji aanu/He is a rice gruel.” The picture that is supposed to leap to mind is of a person who is ungenerous, not just with money but also with his imagination, of a grudging narrow life.

I get the insult, sure, in a transactional way but I could never feel that way about kanji. I don't know what consistent kanji eater could feel that way. My grandfather, for instance, had kanji for dinner quite frequently but never thought of it as anything special, just something hot and familiar and easy to eat. He ate it in a plate (not a bowl) so once most of the rice was spooned up there was — inevitably — direct slurping of the gruel water from the plate. He was self-conscious about it enough to make jokes about it but not self-conscious enough to not slurp. I never heard my grandfather using kanji as an insult but every now and then he would tell this kanji joke:

An old man is excited to get his first invitation to stay at his civil servant son's home in Thiruvananthapuram. He leaves his village and thinks about all the new and exciting things he would eat at his fancypants son's house. It is not an easy journey and he is quite exhausted when he arrives late at night. His son welcomes him warmly. The old man sits down for his meal and his daughter-in-law puts down a plate before him. A plate of what she had thought would be comfort food for her elderly father-in-law. And there it was the familiar, detested podiari kanji with its familiar broken brown rice. Thunderstruck, the old man exclaims at the gruel, “Ambada! You managed to get to Thiruvananthapuram before I did!” The telling of this story had nothing to do with my grandfather's feelings about kanji of course. It was usually an unobtrusive instruction to my much-harassed grandmother that he would not stand to be fed the same things too frequently. Or a subtle instruction to the rest of us that we should not bore other people.

**I.C Answer the following in 150-200 words**

**(2x15=30)**

1. Do we grow to tolerate some food items not because we develop a taste for it but because we develop a fondness for the people who love it and/or eat it in a certain way? Why should that be part of food writing? Explain.
2. Write about a memorable eating experience without using more than two adjectives.

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