

Register Number:

Date:

**ST. JOSEPH’S COLLEGE (AUTONOMOUS), BANGALORE – 27**

**VI SEMESTER EJP--END SEMESTER EXAMINATION: APRIL 2019**

**JN 6313 - Arts & Culture Journalism**

**Time- 2 ½ HOURS Max Marks- 70**

**Instructions:**

1. **This paper has THREE SECTIONS and FOUR printed pages.**
2. **This paper is for the VI Semester Journalism students who have opted for the Arts & Culture Elective.**
3. **You are allowed to use a dictionary.**
4. **Read this excerpt from a New Yorker essay by Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie.**

**Real Food**

My childhood dislike of *garri*, a Nigerian staple

By Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie

I was nine years old, sitting stiffly at the dining table in my blue-and-white school uniform, and across from me sat my mother, who had come home from work at the university registry, elegant in her swishy skirt, smelling of Poison perfume and saying she wanted to watch me eat. I still do not know who told her that I was skipping lunch before school. Perhaps it was the houseboy, Fide. Perhaps it was my little brother Kenechukwu, who went to school in the morning and came home just before I left. The firm set of her mouth told me that I had no choice but to eat the *garri* and soup placed on the table. I made the sign of the cross. I plucked a morsel from the soft lump of *garri*. I lightly molded it with my fingers. I dipped it into the soup. I swallowed. My throat itched. I disliked all the variants of this quintessential Nigerian food, whether made from corn, cassava, or yams, whether cooked or stirred or pounded in a mortar until they became a soft mash. It was jokingly called “swallow,” because one swallowed the morsels without chewing; it was easy to tell that a person chewing *garri* was a foreigner.

“Hurry up,” my mother said. “You will be late for school.” We had *garri* for lunch every day except Sunday, when we had rice and stew and sometimes a lush salad that contained everything from baked beans to boiled eggs and was served with dollops of creamy dressing. The soups gave some variety to lunch: the yellowish *egusi*, made of ground melon seeds and vegetables; *onugbu,* rich with dark-green bitterleaf; *okro,* with its sticky sauce; *nsala,* with beef chunks floating in a thin herb-filled broth. I disliked them all.

That afternoon, it was *egusi* soup. My mother’s eyes were steady behind her glasses. “Are you playing with that food or eating it?” she asked. I said I was eating. Finally, I finished and said, “Mummy, thank you,” as all well-brought-up Igbo children were supposed to after a meal. I had just stepped outside the carpeted dining area and onto the polished concrete floor of the passage when my stomach churned and recoiled and the *garri* and soup rushed up my throat.

I wish I ate *garri*. It is important to the people I love: My late grandmother used to want to have *garri* three times a day. My brother’s idea of a perfect meal is pounded yam. My father once came home from a conference in Paris, and when I asked how it had gone, he said that he had missed real food. In Igbo, another word for “swallow” is simply “food,” so that one might overhear a sentence like “The food was well pounded, but the soup was not tasty.” My brothers, with affectionate mockery, sometimes ask whether it is possible for a person who does not eat swallow to be authentically Igbo, Nigerian, African.

**I.A. Answer ANY TWO of the following in 150 words. (2x15=30)**

1. Examine all the italicised words in the essay. Do you think it is necessary to italicise words from a native language in an English essay? Why? What purpose does it serve?
2. Write about a food item that usually comes with a set of special instructions on how best to eat/cook it. Is that as much a part of food writing as food itself? Explain.
3. What food visual was more memorable than others in *Zone Pro Site*? Why?
4. **Read this excerpt from an interview of Clifford Geertz by David Berreby.**

Social scientists less sympathetic to the literary spirit saw Geertz as a presiding spirit of nihilism. A typical attack from the hard-core social scientists was that Geertz has encouraged the "metatwaddle" of a fashionable relativism: the idea that every culture's practices, from child sacrifice to clitoridectomy to mutilation for thieves, must get equal respect. "Look, I think clitoridectomy is a horrible business," Geertz says.

"But what are we going to do? Invade the Horn of Africa and arrest everybody? If you're serious about addressing this, you ask people there about the practice and you listen to them. You listen to women from there who justify the practice. You want to change things, you don't start by proclaiming that you possess the truth. That's not very helpful.

Understanding what people think doesn't mean you have to think the same thing. You don't just say 'whatever you do is fine.' Just saying 'it's their culture' doesn't legitimize everything.

To be open to dialogue with other people doesn't mean you don't have any values of your own. I hold democratic values, but I have to recognize that a lot of other people don't hold them. So, it doesn't help much to say, 'This is the truth.' That doesn't mean I don't believe anything.

The challenge is to find a way to keep one's values and identity while living with other values -- values you can neither destroy nor approve. You can't assert yourself in the world as if nobody else was there. Because this isn't a clash of ideas. There are people attached to those ideas. If you want to live without violence, you have to realize that other people are as real as you are.

**I.B** What can young journalists aspiring to ‘change the world’ learn from this passage? Where can Geertz’s approach be aptly applied? **Answer in 250 words. (20 marks)**

1. **Read this excerpt from an article published on Round Table India by Asha Kowtal.**

In August 2013, Kaafi, our sister from Jind Haryana was on her way to write her final exams and qualify to be a teacher. She was kidnapped, raped and murdered. Her dream to be a teacher and her aspirations to contribute to her family, her community and to this nation were shattered.

We did not have the ‘privilege’ to even mourn her loss as we continued to protest and demand for justice. She became a source of strength to the many young activists who are taking forward the caravan for annihilation of caste.

Today, as I sat amongst the crowds at Jantar Mantar, I remembered Kaafi and Rohith, both young Dalit students who lost their lives in tragic circumstances. To me, they will always remain stars who will be the guiding light in the anti-caste struggle. They are not mere icons, but a significant part of our history of resilience against the monster of caste. Our children will read about them as their ancestors who inspired the movement to keep growing and challenging the caste hegemony in this country. But, today, I am once again gripped with fear.

Because our history is being distorted even before it is fully formed. Right before our eyes. Anti-caste slogans are being merged with or replaced with slogans for right to dissent, free speech and everything else! Rohith and scores of our young people are being projected as icons for some other larger (mysterious) cause. Our fight is against caste which Dr Ambedkar termed as anti-national. How is it possible to create a discourse on nationalism when we are a people deeply divided on the basis of caste?

I was dumbstruck and horrified as I sat and listened to several Savarna speakers at the Delhi Chalo Protest at Jantar Mantar. One of the Savarna leftist madam, referred to Rohith’s amma as the true ‘Bharat Mata’! She further went on to say that all the Dalit mothers in this country are the true mothers of this nation. The amazing ease with which she wielded her caste privilege to make such a statement was amusing to say the least. How conveniently she forgot the centuries of privilege that her community have maintained by safeguarding their bloodline, their knowledge and assets. My jaw dropped several times as I heard loud Jai Bhim slogans from Savarna speakers who repeatedly kept using the term ‘Hindustan’ during their speeches! They are exposing their foolishness and insulting the name of Babasaheb Ambedkar.

We heard several critiques of Modi-model of development and RSS bashing without a real analysis of the Savarna castes consolidation that happened across the globe; without which this Government would never be a reality for us today. Caste privilege offers an easy and seamless way to project oneself as ‘progressive’ without acknowledging the historical wrongs committed against those oppressed by caste.

Another Savarna speaker expressed her amazement at the beautiful multi-coloured flags visible at the protest. It seems her heart was filled with joy and she hoped that this will signify a new tri-colour for this nation! I wondered if her caste privilege ever allowed her to think about the fact that discrimination, untouchability, caste atrocities and exclusion makes us writhe with agony. Thinking of a new tri-colour for this country which was never ours … is perhaps not something that communities denied of agency are thinking of at the moment! Aahh ... the politics of colour and again I’m so thankful that I love blue!

Speeches also included apologies to Rohith’s amma. It seemed like they were invoking a collective apology from everybody and I sat there thinking about her very noble intention. How do they plan to apologise for the hundreds of my people who are brutally attacked, raped and butchered every day in this country? Is it possible to un-pack centuries of privilege enjoyed by their ancestors at the cost of the lives of my people? Clarion calls for a revolution were made by speaker after speaker from the dais today. It reminded me of the words of Babasaheb Ambedkar - whether before or after the revolution, the question of caste needs to be grappled with. In other words, he clearly said, turn in any direction you like, caste is the monster that crosses your path. You cannot have political reform, you cannot have economic reform, unless you kill this monster. Without a doubt the movement needs solidarity. But blatant manipulative appropriation in the name of solidarity needs to be exposed and challenged. It’s time to create innovative counter models of real transformation for the community.

**I.C Answer the following in 100 to 150 words each. (2x10=20)**

1. **“**Caste privilege offers an easy and seamless way to project oneself as ‘progressive’ without acknowledging the historical wrongs committed against those oppressed by caste” – what do you understand by this?
2. In what ways do films like *Fandry* and *Pariyerum Perumal* offer an understanding of caste, privilege and our responses to them?

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