

JK LakshmiPat University, Jaipur
Institute of Management/Institute of Engineering
END TERM EXAMINATION MAY 2019

BBA/Btech Backlog Exam

Course- Fundamentals of Critical Thinking

Roll No.....

MM: 40 Marks

Time: 2 Hours

Subject code: CCT201

Q1- Use the question formulation technique to answer the below:

a-Using the article below ask 20 pertinent questions.

b-Identify 5 significant questions from your list that will help you to dig deeper. Explain why you chose each of them.

(Marks 15)

Myths have meanings that we ignore at our own peril

Had the elemental fury of flash floods not rained down on Uttarakhand last week, June 18 (June 19, according to some almanacs), would have been a day of festivity and ritual for Hindu devotees across north India. They would have relived the mythology of the Ganga's descent from heaven to earth with a dip in its waters at various pilgrimage centres.

Ganga Dussehra – celebrated on the tenth day of the waxing moon in the third month of the Hindu almanac – usually coincides with the opening up of ice-bound holy sites such as Kedarnath, Badrinath, and Gangotri.

This time, however, the sweeping devastation along the banks of the Ganga in Uttarakhand, with Kedarnath feeling its full force, swiftly transformed the mood from celebration to mourning.

In the midst of so much grief, how do we reflect on the mythology of Ganga's descent in a way that it enables us to comprehend a tragedy of this magnitude, and perhaps relearn a relationship between human and nature that is life-affirming. For that to happen, it is necessary to look beyond the veil of ritual surrounding this myth. At its core, this mythology is made up of

aspects which have been integral to people's ways of life in mountains, lived in full awareness of the towering presence of nature.

Two narratives

The myth of Ganga's descent contains two very different narratives. The first part is a narrative of power. At its simplest, the story of Ganga's descent starts on a note of hubris, with a proud king called Sagara whose ambition is to conquer the world. As it becomes clear that there are few to rival Sagara, the gods above intervene. Sagara's 60,000 arrogant sons (all born of one of his wives) are reduced to ash by the wrath of sage Kapila for having disrupted his meditation. King Sagara dies of grief. For his sons, now mere heaps of impure ash, there is no salvation for generations on end.

Then, Bhagiratha (descended from the son of Sagara's second wife) ascends the throne, and from here the narrative of the myth changes track. Deeply stirred by the fate of his ancestors, he leaves his throne to undergo two long and increasingly severe penances in the Himalayas. The gods are pleased. Thus Ganga descends from heaven to be caught in the locks of Shiva, who alone can withstand her tempestuous force.

Bhagiratha performs his third penance, whereupon Shiva releases Ganga in several streams. Ganga follows Bhagiratha across mountains, forests and plains to the end of the world where his ancestors' remains lie. Midway, the wilful Ganga scatters sage Jahnu's sacrificial offerings and he swallows her up in rage. Bhagiratha performs one more penance to have her released yet again, showing enormous reserves of persistence.

Finally, Bhagiratha leads her to his ancestors' ashes at Ganga Sagar. Having purified their ashes and paved their way to heaven, Ganga disappears into the ocean.

Origins of a name

That's how the originating head stream of the Ganga gets its name Bhagirathi, say people, the other major headstream of the Ganga being the Alaknanda. These two headstreams, nourished by several others (such as the

Mandakini, flowing alongside Kedarnath) come together as the Ganga, which flows across the plains until it reaches the Bay of Bengal.

The myth of Ganga's descent resonates at different levels in the lives of the people of Uttarakhand. At one level, the story of Ganga getting tangled in Shiva's locks or inexplicably disappearing seems entirely believable in a geological landscape that has seen rivers changing course, or getting blocked — swallowed by tectonic disturbances.

In a wonderfully layered article written in 1994, well-known writer, poet and cultural theorist Priya Devi pointed out an interesting ecological aspect of Ganga Dussehra: "It falls at the leanest moment in the annual cycle of the river, at the precise moment when, before the rains, she begins to swell with snowmelt at her source." It is as if the Ganga comes down from the heavens every year.

At another level, this story provides the alluvium of cultural resources for a society to shape its ecology of existence. That is, if one stays connected to its core. Thus, in a land where nature resists all attempts at 'domination' or 'subjugation', it is Bhagiratha, not Sagara with his goal of world conquest, who emerges as a heroic figure, articulating a different narrative of power. The qualities emblematic of this valorous figure: his 'powers' of persistence, humility, and selflessness.

Priya Devi puts it succinctly: "What distinguishes Bhagiratha and explains his great popularity as a culture hero, is his non-violence, and his remarkable patience. He is quite clear about means and ends. His ends are selfless. It is not his own moksha that he seeks. Equally, he will not seek his ends by applying his will outwardly as a force.

He turns inwards....By the integrity of his self-government he compels outward sanction to his inner motives." This strand of cultural memory can be a potent resource for resistance, for it implies that notions of conquest — of humans or nature — be replaced by the idea of conquest of the self and its excess appetites, whether it is an individual, or society.

Cultural memory

Like a river this cultural memory flows through space and time — now a subterranean existence, now a rapid current over ground. And when it does surface, it lays bare civilisational faultlines such as an exclusionary narrative of power impervious to the political ecology of inclusive instincts. In post-independence India, this cultural memory surfaced in the 1970s to herald a new phase of protest — environmental resistance — that one might term a ‘Bhagiratha prayas’ (the Hindi equivalent for Herculean effort). This phase was accompanied by the articulation of a whole new discourse of Constitutional guarantees such as equality and citizenship emerging from the margins of the Republic, from the Narmada valley to present-day Niyamgiri hills.

In Uttarakhand, too, the past four decades have seen noteworthy movements of environmental resistance built on this principle, such as the 1970s Chipko movement spearheaded by village women like Gaura Devi, which is considered India’s first green movement. From the 1970s to the 1990s, Gandhian activist and environmentalist Sunderlal Bahuguna through long fasts, and many others such as Professor Vinod K. Gaur and other experts of Himalayan geology, questioned the long term impact of big dams such as Tehri (built on the Bhagirathi), on the fragile ecological balance of the Uttarakhand region. As for the Ganga, listed among the 10 most endangered rivers of the world by the Worldwide Fund for Nature, it still awaits the collective conscience of a Bhagiratha to come back to life.

Role of greed

The qualities symbolised by Bhagiratha also exist as part of larger contemporary discourses, when we speak of sustainable development, disparities within nations and between hemispheres, or limiting consumption by putting a leash on gluttony.

The story of Bhagiratha and Ganga is as relevant today, if not more. As news filters in of the near totality of nature’s devastation in Uttarakhand, it is becoming clear that humans have played their part in exacerbating the sheer

scale of the disaster in terms of lives lost and property destroyed. Unchecked construction and increasing encroachment on the **flood** plains of the Ganga to accommodate more and more residential buildings, hotels and tourist rest houses in the name of development, have extracted a huge human cost for a Sagara-like conquest of the environment.

Similarly, in the aftermath of the 1991 Uttarkashi earthquake, experts had pointed to the man-made factors responsible for large-scale destruction: the explosion of inappropriate building techniques and materials in the march to 'modern progress' frequently accompanied with a disdainful neglect of local wisdom. Over the years the nature of protest may have changed, but the issues of entrenched interests vis-a-vis forest, mineral and water resources still remain; on the contrary, they have become more acute.

Due to a range of factors, the catastrophe which brought forth a terrifying side to the Ganga not witnessed in recent times, occurred around the time of Ganga Dussehra.

Yet seen in conjunction, the disaster and the mythology seem to be pointing to the same truth: ritual observance on an appointed day may be important, but is certainly not enough. It is equally significant to internalise the essential spirit and reality of the story of Bhagiratha and Ganga, and, for that, the pact between the self-reflexive human and nature needs to be revived.

(The Hindu)

Q2 A- Critical thinking is essential to effective learning and productive living. Would you share your definition of critical thinking?.....10 Marks

Q2 B-What is the role of curiosity in Critical Thinking? -----5marks

Q2 C- What are the qualities of Critical Thinker?-----5 Marks

Question 3 (5 marks)

Identify facts and opinions in the following statements:

1. My mother likes for me to dress neatly.
a) Fact
b) Opinion
2. I enjoy reading books by Amish Tripathi.
a) Fact
b) Opinion
3. Mahatma Gandhi is the Father of the Nation.
a) Fact
b) Opinion
4. I think *jalebi* is the best dessert ever made.
a) Fact
b) Opinion
5. The Constitution of India is the supreme law of the country.
a) Fact
b) Opinion
6. It is wrong for people under the age of 21 to consume alcohol.
a) Fact
b) Opinion
7. I feel learning to skate is very difficult
a) Fact
b) Opinion
8. My car has four tires.
a) Fact
b) Opinion
9. Women are better drivers than men.
a) Fact
b) Opinion
10. India celebrates its Independence Day on August 15, every year.
a) Fact
b) Opinion