

Teacher Resource Bank

GCE Religious Studies

Unit B (RSS02) *Religion and Ethics 2*

June 2009 Examination Candidate Exemplar Work:

- Candidate A



2009 (June) Unit B Religion and Ethics 2

Example of Candidate's Work from the Examination

Candidate A

- 1 (a) Explain the key differences between deontological and teleological approaches to ethics. Refer to Kant's theory of ethics in your answer.

(30 marks)

AO1

Candidate Response

1(a) The key difference that is apparent between deontological and teleological arguments is the way in which they assess whether it is that is significant in making an act morally wrong or right.

This contrast is present in the fact that deontological ethical theories declare that it is intent the act, which is decisive of the morality of the action, for instance in Kantian ethics it is thought that there is a predetermined rationale and ideology of morality that is innate in all human life forms, and ~~even~~ this provides us with certain duties that must be carried out. This factor gives also an absolutist idea towards it due to the fact that if it is the act that is morally right then clearly this act ~~must~~ must be carried out irrespective of the situation, therefore the duty in Kantian ethics is unconditional and does not depend on emotion or any other intention.

Deontological arguments also show quite clearly for the absence of a Goodly figure within our natural life as is clear within Kant's ethical thinking, where he believes that to even suggest that our own actions or the morality of them is decided by an external doctrine leads ~~up~~ to the debilitation of being a moral agent. However it does leave room for a consequentialist input also due to the fact that there must be a goal in doing these acts of goodness or there

would be no real justification for actually doing them, thus for instance in Kant's ideology he states that there is a supreme good or the summum bonum, which states our acts of morally good, lead us to an ~~final~~ ultimate good where human happiness and virtue are united. This then shows that in deontological arguments there are acts done out of the work ~~from~~ do good acts (not out of the work for a good consequence) which lead to an ultimate end and an ultimate consequence. This can be seen through Kant's idea that 'good will is the greatest good' and that to have good will is to be moral because there is a want to do good even if there is no good outcome.

The within deontological ideas there is also the fact that there is only a possibility to do right if the act is possible for instance ~~never~~ it is our duty to save a life but if this means we need to be able to ~~fly~~ fly to do so it is not possible and in deontological ethics such as that that Kant sets out it is clear that this would not matter as he states that to ~~act~~

'ought' is to be able to from his works on the 'ground work for the Metaphysics of Morals' 1785.

These clearly differ from teleological argument in principle due to the fact that these clearly show greater interest in consequences. Therefore there is no real need for utilitarian because in situation ethics if an act ~~differs~~ goes greater love in one situation but not in another different choices should be made. This brings about two differences, as in the fact that in a deontological ethical system such as Kant's the same act should always be done such as always being honest even if it caused death and the fact that Kant does not believe in the idea of emotions such as love affecting decisions.

There are also clear contrast in the fact that to be a teleological believer one would

have to know the future consequences to do something however Kant would say that this is impossible and therefore is not a moral good. ~~Therefore~~ This ~~is~~ ^{also} come into line with Kant's beliefs

around a priori synthetic, which states that ~~a~~ ^{any} ~~a~~ ^{fact} ~~is~~ ^{is} ~~not~~ ^{is} ~~necessary~~ ^{is} ~~to~~ ^{is} ~~be~~ ^{is} ~~true~~ ^{is} ~~are~~ ^{is} ~~moral~~ ^{is} ~~standings~~, ~~but~~ ^{therefore} it would be hard to know the consequence of something ~~in~~ ⁱⁿ ~~our~~ ^{our} ~~sense~~ ^{is} ~~experience~~ ^{is} ~~of~~ ^{is} ~~it~~ ^{is} ~~and~~ ^{is} ~~this~~ ^{is} ~~would~~ ^{is} ~~make~~ ^{is} ~~it~~ ^{is} ~~a~~ ^{is} ~~posteriori~~ ^{is} ~~and~~ ^{is} ~~wrong~~.

~~Deontological~~ ^{teleological} relativism opposes Kant's thoughts on the categorical imperative dog, which it ~~is~~ ^{is} ~~not~~ ^{is} ~~one's~~ ^{is} ~~moral~~ ^{is} ~~duty~~ ^{is} ~~to~~ ^{is} ~~carry~~ ^{is} ~~out~~. This is because the universal law states that only an act which one can will to be a universal morally good act can be a morally good one, therefore acts have to be continuous whereas with teleological arguments in a situation it could be good to lie and in another it could be

24 good to tell the truth but Kant would believe that this would be a strain on the kingdom of ends and would prevent a community from acting in unity with one another.

Commentary

AO1 (30 marks)

This candidate's writing is sometimes difficult to read. Candidates should make every effort to make sure that their handwriting is legible to the examiner, since illegible sentences convey no content for which the examiner can give credit. In this case, the meaning is generally clear.

The introductory paragraph is immediately relevant in identifying “*the key difference*” as the way in which deontological and teleological theories assess what it is that is significant in making an act morally wrong or right. Kant ethics is based on a predetermined rationale/intention. The candidate is clearly well aware of the different facets of Kant's approach, and mentions duties, absolutism, the intrinsic rightness of moral acts, irrespective of the situation and irrespective of emotion or anything else. Moral acts rely on the internal processes of reason, and not on the external commands of God.

The candidate then makes the point that Kant does allow a consequentialist focus through his concept of the *summum bonum*, which gives an over-arching justification to Kant's system. The *summum bonum* is the future reward given for perfect duty where “human happiness and virtue are united”. The immediate act is done through the good will, and the good will is a reasoned choice because it responds to the moral ‘ought’ (*‘ought implies can’*). The candidate does not mention that the *summum bonum* relates to God as the entity who guarantees the *summum bonum*, but the point is clear enough – in Kant's deontology, to be a moral agent requires the abrogation of all external influences, even God; and ultimately, this leads to the ultimate good consequence of the *summum bonum*.

The candidate goes on to contrast Kant's system with teleological systems that have no need for absolutism, because right and wrong actions are defined differently in different situations. The language in this section is not so incisive, although the candidate continues to make good points, for example that for teleological systems to work well, you have to be able to know more or less what will happen in the future in order to obtain the right consequence, and that being sure of such knowledge is difficult. Moreover for Kant, this lack of knowledge leads to the possibility of immoral choices. Choices can be made only on the basis of rationality, because rationality is immune to the vagaries of different possible outcomes. The candidate makes a valiant attempt to relate this to Kant's argument about the *synthetic a priori* status of morality. The attempt doesn't quite work, but the candidate does get across the point that for morality to require the evidence of changing sense experience would lead to immorality.

The candidate concludes by referring to Kant's central argument concerning the categorical imperative. A community that did not operate in accordance with this principle could not “act in unity with one another”. The kingdom of moral ends cannot be served, for example, by telling the truth situationally.

Clearly this candidate does know the thrust of Kant's deontology, and how it differs from teleological ethics. It is true that the exposition of teleological approaches is rather narrow; nevertheless the information and understanding demonstrated are clearly within Level 6. The information is mostly accurate and relevant. Understanding is demonstrated through the use of appropriate evidence and examples. There is appropriate and accurate use of specialist vocabulary, even though legibility does not impress.

Level 6 (25 marks)

- (b) 'Kant's deontological theory of ethics fails because it ignores the consequences of our moral choices.' Assess how far this is true.

(15 marks)

A02

Candidate Response

b) The statement given could be said to be true by those who believe that it is consequences that matter most and are opposed by those who believe it is actions. For instance it could be said ~~that~~ by a catholic that Kant has the correct way of thinking in this way due to the fact that their thinking is always absolute therefore it is always wrong ~~to~~ to murder or drugs wrong to steal, which comes into ~~the~~ line with Kant's beliefs on the duty.

However it would be said by a utilitarian that this is wrong because killing a mass murderer for instance would be right as this provides alot of happiness to a lot of people thus it is the ~~&~~ consequence that really matters because it generates more of a better emotion.

This could be in contrast to the thoughts of a scientific or logical thinker however due to the fact that they would believe that deontological thinking is the most appropriate as all can never tell what the true outcome of a act is going to be due to the fact that this is impossible to know.

when assessing Kant's ethics it could be said that his deontology was in complete contrast to the whole reason he reached for following his beliefs which are the summum bonum. This insinuates the possibility that there is some teleological thinking because there is a consequence which is the supreme good and that nature.

On review it is appropriate to say that it is possible that deontological thinking is in fact the better way about things due to the lack of need to be able to predict the future. However when looking at Kant's ethics it is faulty all for from flawless because there are intrinsic teleological ideas that oppose his deontological direction.

Commentary

AO2 (15 marks)

This evaluation is a Level 6 answer. It is mostly relevant; it is a reasoned response to the question being considered; different views are explained with some supporting evidence and argument, and the evaluation is consistent with the reasoning it offers. The flow of argument is not the developed critical analysis that would be typical of a Level 7 answer; moreover it does not really address *directly* the suggestion that Kant's theory 'fails'. Nevertheless the candidate argues coherently that deontological ethics avoid the need to engage in the dubious process of predicting the future. The candidate also argues reasonably that the teleological focus of the *summum bonum* detracts from Kant's absolute deontological focus.

The comment that Roman Catholic thinking is always absolute is not strictly true, since there is a teleological aspect to natural law in the law of Double Effect, where those who follow the rules can benefit from any unintended consequences of their actions. The suggestion that scientists would naturally be deontological in their thinking is unsubstantiated, primarily because it appears not to be true.

Level 6 (12 marks)

3 (a) Explain what is meant by the idea that God sustains the created world.

(30 marks)

A01

Candidate Response

30) The idea that God sustains the created world is an idea which highlights the possibility of there being a personal and ^{immanent} transcendent God that is present within the earth, overseeing the changes that occur.

This can be seen in the idea of process theology for instance

which states that God is the trigger and the creator of a world that is on the way to becoming perfect. Although this theory would state ~~that~~ in some cases that God is apart from the world and allowing ~~the~~ ~~world~~ to become perfect by itself it could be said that He sustains this by being the reason for it happening.

On the other hand this could relate ~~to~~ to the possibility of the ideas of pantheists and panentheists who believe that God is in total part of the world and therefore it is He who sustains the change and personally has effect as it is due to the fact that He is part of it.

This would not oppose the deist idea of separation however due to the fact that there is the possibility that there is a God, which is a ~~deist~~

the world but affects the happenings in it. This can be seen in Christianity for instance which displays the belief that there is God within all of us within our souls and within our consciences, which means that we use the God within us to ~~make~~ make decisions every day, which to have effect on the world/all the way in which it is sustained. These non fundamentalists of the people in this faith would believe the possibility that there is a human or spirit in nature (Holy Spirit, Jesus/and the Holy Spirit) that have direct effect on the actual happenings that occur on earth.

St Thomas Aquinas who is a theologian may even give reference to this with the ideas of the First cause argument in the sense of that process theology does, insinuating that God's act of sparking the big bang was in fact led to the evolution and scientific advancement that we have modern and until this day therefore in a way it is His act that has caused the progression of the earth.

Commentary

AO1 (30 marks)

One thing that is readily apparent with this answer is that it does not reach the same standard as the response to the question on Kantian ethics, either in breadth or in depth. The essay begins with the view that God might be immanent within the forces of nature, thus sustaining the world by operating within those processes. Some Christians believe that God is both immanent and transcendent, but this is not stated here, and it appears that "transcendent" might be a mistake for 'immanent'.

The second paragraph is also questionable, in so far as the idea that “God is the trigger and the creator of a world that is on the way to becoming perfect” is arguably not a key idea in process theology. Process theology has many different ramifications. God might be said to sustain the world by influencing human minds to overcome evil, for example. There is some hint of this idea in the statement about God perhaps wanting the world to become perfect by itself, but that idea is not properly explained.

The two short paragraphs that follow are intended to show the difference between a pantheist/panentheist approach and that of a deist. The reference to pantheism/panentheism illustrates the point made in the opening paragraph about an immanent God. The reference to deism does not really illustrate anything, since its ideas are not at all clear.

The penultimate paragraph returns to the idea of God sustaining the world by being within it, for example through the operation of the (God-given) conscience, and through the incarnate power of Jesus, for example. The final paragraph adds a development of Aquinas’ First-Cause argument – that a First Cause is necessarily responsible for evolution and for human scientific advance, so God acts as sustainer through his causal nature – a good point.

The answer as a whole is generally satisfactory, primarily because it gives a reasonable spread of ideas about how God might sustain the universe by being immanent within it in some form. Less satisfactory is the reference to how a *transcendent* God might sustain the world, where the ideas are not clearly articulated. A clear reference, for example, to Tillich’s idea that God is then ‘ground of our being’, or to the concept that transcendent God sustains the universe ontologically, would have taken the essay well into Level 5. As it stands, the essay is at the upper end of Level 4.

Level 4 (19 marks)

3 (b) ‘If God sustains the world, then God cannot be morally good.’ Assess this view.

(15 marks)

A02

Candidate Response

5) The statement given ~~is~~ could be understood so true by those who believe in God's liberal involvement of sustaining the world and therefore sustaining the evil that occurs but would be opposed by those who believe that there is either a free agent himself who also has involvement or that God is not totally responsible in either way. For instance it would be said by a Christian who perhaps is not a fundamentalist that God gave us choice and therefore it is in fact our choices that allow

is to go against the God that is within us therefore when bad things occur in our faults that they do so because we have made decisions against God.

However if a person takes a fundamentalist view of the Bible it could be seen that God created a world which he believed to be perfect, therefore all the ~~was~~ ~~things~~ that occurs is God's will, this would however be contradicted with the thoughts of a process theologian who would state that ~~the world~~ we are put on the road to perfection, thus God takes

the end product that will ~~a~~ surface.

Another angle that could be taken by a fundamentalist is one of an acute force of evil fighting against God, the Devil, who would indeed cause us and tempt us to do wrong which would allow for the possibility that what we do is not always influenced by God but sometimes by a malicious force. This would show that God sustains the earth but the Devil is its demise.

In review it could be said and this statement can only be judged by the way in which one views God and therefore the religion, which one takes, God is morally wrong if he causes iniquity but only if he wants it and not if he does not.

Commentary

AO2 (15 marks)

This evaluation is partially successful in that it acknowledges different points of view, and although some of its ideas are not explained clearly, other ideas show a reasonable development. Paragraph 1 is clear enough – for those who accept that God literally does sustain the world in some way, God must sustain evil, so God’s moral goodness is questionable. By contrast, for those who accept the existence of some force that opposes God’s will, God is not totally responsible for moral evil, so can retain moral goodness.

The candidate’s view of fundamentalism is not particularly helpful. In general Fundamentalists do not automatically remove free choice from humans. Equally, a fundamentalist belief in the perfection of God’s creation does not entail that God wishes any evil that occurs within creation. The reference to process theology at the end of paragraph 3 again gets bogged down in the idea that the processes of the universe will lead to perfection - the comment leads nowhere beyond a statement which (even allowing for its illegibility) is unintelligible. The *general* point that the candidate is making, about the balance between God’s will and human free choice, is clear enough. This point is expanded in the closing two paragraphs, with the appropriate conclusion that God can be judged to be morally wrong only if God “causes iniquity” through his sustaining activity.

Level 5 (11 marks)