

555/02

RELIGIOUS STUDIES RS 5b

EASTERN RELIGIONS

Studies in either Buddhism or Hinduism or Sikhism

A.M. WEDNESDAY, 14 June 2006

(1 hour 30 minutes)

ADDITIONAL MATERIALS

In addition to this examination paper, you will need a 12 page answer book.

INSTRUCTIONS TO CANDIDATES

Answer questions from **one** Section only **either** Section A or B or Section C.

Write your answers in the separate answer book provided.

INFORMATION FOR CANDIDATES

All questions carry 25 marks. The number of marks is given in brackets at the end of each question or part-question.

You are reminded of the need for good English and clear presentation in your answers.

All questions should be answered in continuous prose. Quality of Written Communication will be assessed in all questions.

Answer questions from **one** section only, **either** Section A **or** Section B **or** Section C.

SECTION A: Studies in Buddhism

Answer **two** questions.

1. (a) Explain Theravada beliefs about the arhat. [15]
 (b) 'The idea of the arhat is much closer than the idea of the bodhisattva to the teachings of the Buddha.'
 Evaluate this contention. [10]
2. (a) Explain the purposes of Buddhist meditation practices. [15]
 (b) 'Meditation is the heart of Buddhism.'
 Assess this view. [10]
3. (a) Examine the major features of British Buddhism. [15]
 (b) Evaluate to what extent any **one** British Buddhist Community is responsible for the popularity of Buddhism in Britain. [10]

SECTION B: Studies in Hinduism

Answer **two** questions.

1. (a) Explain, with reference to examples, Vedic religious practices. [15]
 (b) 'The Upanishads, without doubt, are the most significant and valuable of the Vedic scriptures.'
 Evaluate this contention. [10]
2. (a) Explain, with reference to the text, what the Bhagavad Gita teaches about the nature of Krishna. [15]
 (b) 'Bhakti is the focus of the Bhagavad Gita.'
 Assess this view. [10]
3. (a) Give an account of the Swaminarayan Movement. [15]
 (b) 'Of all Hindu movements the Swaminarayan Movement has the most to offer modern believers.'
 Evaluate this contention. [10]

Section C: Studies in Sikhism

Answer two questions.

1. (a) Explain the importance of the Guru Granth Sahib in Sikhism. [15]
(b) 'A text is seen as sacred, not so much because it comes from God, but because it is recognised as valuable by believers.'
Assess this view with reference to the Guru Granth Sahib. [10]

2. (a) Explain the effect of the Partition of the Punjab on Sikh life and identity. [15]
(b) 'Sikh demands for a state of Khalistan cannot be justified.'
Evaluate this view. [10]

3. (a) Examine the development of the Sikh community in Britain. [15]
(b) Evaluate the view that the only solution to the challenges Sikhs face in Britain is adoption of secular British culture and lifestyle. [10]