



GCE A level

1348/06

RELIGIOUS STUDIES

RS3 ER - Studies in Eastern Religions

A.M. THURSDAY, 31 May 2012

1¾ hours

ADDITIONAL MATERIALS

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

INSTRUCTIONS TO CANDIDATES

Use black ink or black ball-point pen.

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

Write your answers in the separate answer book provided.

Write the number of each question you answer both alongside your answer and on the front cover of the answer book.

INFORMATION FOR CANDIDATES

Each question carries 50 marks.

The number of marks is given in brackets at the end of each part-question.

Part (*a*) of each question tests your knowledge and understanding.

Part (*b*) of each question tests your skills of reasoning and evaluation.

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

All questions should be answered in continuous prose. Assessment will take into account the quality of written communication in all your answers.

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) Outline the main teachings of the Buddha to be found in the suttas. [30]
 (b) ‘Theravada scriptures tell us more about the Buddha than Mahayana scriptures.’
 Evaluate this view. [20]

2. (a) Explain the notion of ‘Enlightened Beings’ in Buddhist tradition. [30]
 (b) ‘Mahayana beliefs about nirvana are more persuasive than those found in Theravada Buddhism.’
 Assess this contention. [20]

3. (a) Explain **three** Buddhist practices. [30]
 (b) ‘The practice of the nembutsu cannot be described as Buddhist.’
 Assess this view. [20]

4. (a) Examine the history and lifestyle of any **one** Buddhist group in the UK **except** the Friends of the Western Buddhist Order. [30]
 (b) ‘The Buddhist emphasis on personal experience explains its popularity in the West.’
 Evaluate this view. [20]

Section B: Studies in Hinduism

Answer two questions.

1. (a) Examine the origins of Hinduism. [30]
(b) 'Hinduism today is clearly the same as it was in its earliest forms.'
Evaluate this contention. [20]

2. (a) Explain, with reference to the text, what the Bhagavad Gita teaches about the nature of Krishna. [30]
(b) Evaluate the view that the Bhagavad Gita is an allegory. [20]

3. (a) Examine the distinctive characteristics of the Swaminarayan Movement. [30]
(b) Assess the view that the Swaminarayan Movement is more concerned with social issues than with religion. [20]

4. (a) Examine how women are valued in Hinduism. [30]
(b) 'Discrimination against women cannot be justified on grounds of religion.'
Evaluate this contention with reference to Hinduism. [20]

Section C: Studies in Sikhism

Answer two questions.

1. (a) Examine the contents of the Japji in Sikhism. [30]
(b) 'The Japji is the source of all Sikh beliefs.'
Evaluate this view. [20]

2. (a) Examine the historical relationship between Islam and Sikhism in the Punjab. [30]
(b) Assess the view that Sikhs have always been persecuted. [20]

3. (a) Explain Sikh attitudes to caste. [30]
(b) Evaluate the view that beliefs expressed by the Gurus about equality are not lived out in the lives of Sikhs. [20]

4. (a) Examine the history of Sikhism in the UK. [30]
(b) Evaluate the view that Sikh identity in Britain today is more cultural than religious. [20]