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Examiners' Report

June 2011

GCE Religious Studies 6RS03 01

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Introduction

The standard of work for 6RS03 Developments was commendable this session, with many well prepared candidates responding very positively to the paper. The highest credit invariably is given to those candidates who are prepared to respond to the questions set, rather than writing a generic essay which does not directly fit the question asked. Some candidates conspicuously wrote answers to questions which had appeared in previous sittings, or even wrote essays about topics that were not even on the paper. Clearly this cannot be to candidates' advantage and centres should ensure that their candidates are equipped to respond to a range of possible questions on a topic. Nevertheless, many candidates took the opportunity to write at length and to show a wide knowledge and confident understanding of complex topics. The majority of candidates opt for two philosophy questions and one ethics question, with a minority favouring ethics. New Testament continues to draw a significant number of responses, particularly to questions on the Fourth Gospel, and many New Testament candidates choose to answer two questions on this area. Smaller numbers answered questions on Islam, which remains the most popular option amongst the world religions, with small numbers option for Hinduism, Buddhism, and Christianity. Candidates responded better to two part questions this year, and were more prepared to offer an opinion or judgement in answers to the (ii) questions. Fewer candidates resorted to repeating material from (i) but again, it is important for centres to note that to obtain higher level marks, candidates need to answer the question set and not to assume that every part (ii) question simply requires an outline of strengths and weaknesses. Centres are encouraged to ensure that their candidates are aware of the need to begin each new question on the appropriate page of the answer book. Many candidates inserted an extra piece of paper to add a very short comment which could have easily been inserted within the writing space in the answer booklet. Centres are encouraged to limit candidates' use of extra paper to genuine cases of over writing the answer space. It is encouraging to see use made of the Edexcel text book, and centres are directed to this as an important resource which supports this qualification. As ever, the most successful answers are those which make good, relevant and accurate use of materials appropriate to this stage of learning and assessment. It is also worth reiterating that successful candidates are invariably those who have written three complete answers. There is no substitute for timed exam practice well before the event to ensure that candidates are not caught out by poor time management in the exam.

Question 1 (a)

Question 1(a) Religious Experience This was very well done at the highest level with a wide range of relevant evidence, useful scholarship and excellent breadth of knowledge and understanding. All manner of religious experiences were debated and the fluency and use of technical language were admirable. In the mid to low range, candidates tended to write all they know about two (or more) types of religious experience, with limited depth or analysis. Weaker responses did not distinguish between features of religious experience and the argument from religious experience, which lead to a degree of description and a tendency to list problems of religious experience. However, some good knowledge was displayed: Swinburne's principles of credulity and testimony, a priori/a posteriori and real/non-real experiences, neuro-science/psychology and James' typology/cumulative argument/conversions, and, inevitably, critical comment from Richard Dawkins on the matter! Candidates who were prepared to outline a philosophical argument in the form of formal premises set themselves up well to answer the question, and this approach is heartily to be encouraged. The best responses were able to use a predictable range of material but employed it fully to address both parts (i) and (ii). Only the higher level responses addressed part (ii) head on and discussed 'trustworthiness' whilst most contented themselves with writing about strengths and weaknesses. Nevertheless, copious good examples were used and cross fertilisation from the anthology was in evidence although some suggested Donovan was wholly in favour of the argument from religious experience.

A good response to this question typically opened with a reference to the argument from religious experience rather than to features of religious experience.

In the box, state whether you are answering part(a) or part(b). a

ai) ~~Re~~ The argument from religious experience is a powerful one for believers and is the grounding for many world religions. ^{A key feature is that:} It is an a posteriori argument as it is based on the experience of believers and it is also inductive as the conclusion does not necessarily follow. However it can be written in a deductive form.

P1: If people experience an entity, it exists.

P2: People experience God

P3: Therefore God exists.



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Examiner Comments

The opening paragraph of this essay targets the argument using technical language and an example of a set of premises which could be used to illustrate the argument. Note that there is no set form of premises that candidates are expected to use, so they may formulate a set which helps them then to structure their response.



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Examiner Tip

A candidate could go on to analyse each premise, using examples and illustrations, and use this discussion as the basis of their answer to part (i).

Question 1 (b)

Question 1(b) Ontological Argument

The question on this popular topic came with a very definite instruction in both parts of the question, to relate it to atheism. It was the most popular question and generally well-done with candidates at the top end offering very impressive and lengthy accounts of the Ontological Argument coupled with a range of convincing views and scholarly debate. Many candidates appeared to offer rote-learned answers to a different question. Mid-range responses linked with atheism were sometimes a little tenuous. Only the very high level responses tackled the issue of atheism directly whilst mid-range answers were certainly accurate and valid, though missing the atheistic cutting edge. A few left out reference to it altogether. At the lower end candidates wrote simplistic versions of the Ontological Argument supplemented by a few scholarly criticisms. Many candidates focused on Anselm's argument, particularly his address to 'the Fool' (some exclusively so) but most were also able to make reference to Descartes. Malcolm's and Plantinga's contributions were also referenced, but usually briefly, with few candidates appearing to really understand these scholars' arguments. In responses to (ii) a few candidates did merely focus on Gaunilo's criticisms, but many discussed the criticisms of Aquinas, Hume, Kant and even Dawkins and Gasking. Few candidates made use of the material from the atheism/critiques of religious belief option on this paper, and Centres are encouraged to invite candidates to make these links when they are appropriate.

The heart of this question in both (i) and (ii) was in how far the candidate made the link with atheism. This candidate has done so by linking the criticisms of the argument with critiques of religious belief as well as with standard challenges to the Ontological Argument.

Davies presents an incredibly strong argument in support for atheism as he claims that Malcolm's assumptions that God is necessary or impossible thing gives strength to atheism as an atheist would claim God is impossible. This supports the idea of both Freud and Marx as they would claim that God is a human concept. Freud claiming that he is a projection of the guilt felt by a child who wants to kill the same sex parent and Marx would claim God has a function in that the bourgeoisie can keep the poor in their place.

Russell and Frege both claim that atheism is significantly strengthened as Anselm and Descartes use existence as a predicate when it is an

"extension of my intention"

whereas Frege claims that there are two orders of predicates the first being to show the nature of something, i.e. horses are brown and the second being to show a concept of them i.e. that they exist or are numerous. He claims that Anselm and Descartes are very weak as they use the first order predicate when they should be proving the second.

Overall it is clear that the ontological argument is berried beneath the strength of the criticisms which is a great strength to Atheism. The only conclusion that can be made is that if God exists he exists necessarily and the "essence" of God needs to be found which would be more convincing for an atheist.



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Examiner Comments

In their response to part (ii) of this question this candidate has thought on their feet in the exam and made use of the material they had learned on Marx and Freud's critiques of religious belief. Although there are many other ways they could have answered this question they have been resourceful in the exam.



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Examiner Tip

Candidates should be prepared to link the argument from religious experience and the Ontological Argument with atheism and critiques of religious belief, and if they ensure they can do this, they may make the link relevantly even if the question has not asked for it specifically.

Question 2 (a)

Question 2(a) Life after Death

With some candidates merely recounting narrative examples of resurrection accounts, near death experiences, or evidence of reincarnation, examiners noted that this question drew the weakest responses. Several candidates ignored the wording of the question and wrote prepared essays comparing and contrasting different perspectives on life after death, whilst better responses tried to differentiate between the problems, using scholarly arguments to highlight significance and made use of a good range of scholars and useful examples. Some produced some very good discussion on the connection between human anthropology and beliefs about life after death. On the other hand, some responses offered sparse descriptions of heaven and hell, or a simple outline of a religious perspective. For example, some referred only to the resurrection of Jesus, but not to the wider concept of the resurrection of the body. Candidates did draw on a vast background of ideas: Hinduism, Buddhism, Christianity, dualism, monism and materialism. Some candidates appeared to be confused about how scholars fitted in and which views they supported, notably Ryle, who appeared to oppose and support every theory at the same time! In other cases, a lack of scholarly opinion weakened responses, particularly when students based their response entirely on eastern philosophy but without scholarly opinion or eastern concepts to support their views. Many essays were based around a very generic idea of philosophical features, which candidates had interpreted as essentially any feature they knew about. The second part of the question demanded that candidates reach a conclusion about whether there are 'significant problems' with believing in life after death. Some candidates offered only a vague catalogue of criticisms rather than tackling the issues at a more philosophical level. Stronger responses typically made reference to Hume and Dawkins, and to Hick's replica and eschatological verification theories.

The thrust of the question is to identify philosophical features, and the examiners were looking to reward candidates who avoided narrative and showed some understanding of the concepts which underpinned beliefs in the afterlife.

In the box, state whether you are answering part(a) or part(b). A

The concept of life after death is incredibly appealing to many people. The idea that after the death of the physical body ~~the soul~~ your body will be replicated by God or your soul will go elsewhere is attractive for a number of reasons. However it is this metaphysical existence after the death of the physical body which raises a large number of questions. Dualism, the belief that the body is formed of two parts, the physical and the non physical and born from a psycho physical entity puts forward the idea that after the death of the physical body the non physical will continue to live elsewhere. Monism is also linked in with this however monism unlike dualism believes that ~~the~~ the parts do not separate. ~~Reincarnation~~ The resurrection of the body as put forward in the bible and in particular in Paul's letters to the Corinthians argues that a bodily resurrection like

most of Jesus will take place.

Dualism as put forward by Plato, Descartes and Kant argues that the body is made up of two parts, the physical and the non-physical. Plato's ~~concept~~ puts forward the idea of the "realm of the forms". The realm of the forms contains a perfect form of every human being and this form is contained in mine before the birth of the physical body and after the death of the physical body it returns to the realm of the forms, ~~Plato's concept of the forms is that the soul is immortal and it is not subject to death~~ he also has his "analogy of the cave". Descartes argues that one cannot even be certain that they exist however he reasons that since he can think and reason that "therefore I am" he does exist. His argument is linked to the fact that he is not completely aware of his own existence so he takes a rational part of new ont and is also a dualist. Kant also a dualist argues that one can not achieve the greatest good, the "summum bonum" in this life so there must be an after life in which to achieve this. Therefore that must prove the existence of God.

Life after death provides the believer with something to work forward to and since physical life is so short all that they want to achieve can happen in the after life. The fear of death is made easier by the thought of an after life and since the good are not rewarded and the evil not punished as Kant argues in this life, this can happen in an after life.

The resurrection of the body as put forward in the old

Testament and the New Testament is a belief about life after death. In 1 Corinthians 15 Paul explains to his people that ~~the~~ life after death can only be achieved if they believe that Jesus himself was resurrected. This will include a bodily resurrection unlike in dualism where the body is split into two parts. ~~the~~ Job in the Old Testament is guaranteed a bodily resurrection and this is the same in Ezekiel where bodily resurrection is promised as well "at the last trumpet" and in Revelation there is the promise of "no more grief, crying or pain".



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Examiner Comments

This answer is not perfect, as they spend little time on resurrection of the body and timing issues may have impacted on part (i). However, they avoid narrative and concentrate on showing an understanding of the concepts behind the beliefs. Although they could have organised their answer better and there are some mistakes in biblical referencing, the candidate has understood the approach the question demanded.



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Examiner Tip

Make sure you respond to the wording of the question, otherwise you will hit a self-imposed ceiling of marks. This candidate could have done much better by organising time and material better, but the marks they have gained they have done so by following the instruction in the question.

until God gave him the non-physical breath of life combined with the physical body in a psycho-physical unity.

Job 19 also says "Although worms destroy my body, in the flesh I shall see God." This means that Job can possess a time after the death of his physical body where God will give him a new resurrected body to ~~so~~ continue existence with in God's presence. Daniel also includes this idea but adds the idea of judgement to it.

In 1 Corinthians Paul writes to the Church emphasising the importance of believing in the physical resurrection of Christ and that the faithful will ~~be~~ all be given a resurrected body after death.

ii) In order to know if there are significant problems in believing in life after death one must examine the weaknesses of the theories which believers give.

The resurrected body cannot be considered as believable as the idea of a body is something that we can relate to.

However, it requires for there to be a physical place where we continue existence after death yet there is no such place and with the technology we have today one would expect if it did exist we could find it. Some have suggested that the resurrected body is in fact a metaphor for a spiritual body given by God, if this is

So that the resurrected body is simply the immortal soul described as a body.

Hence one must look at the immortal soul theory for strength to life after death. Yet, Gilbert Ryle calls this a category error and holds that this theory would ~~also~~ make our souls a "ghost in a machine." Furthermore there is no evidence for an immortal soul and science has ways of explaining emotion and feelings.

However, ~~it is~~ the hardest step of faith is to believe that there is a life after death at all not which theory to believe, as this will most likely depend on religious belief. Therefore one must embrace life after death as a whole not just individual theories.

~~But~~ Dawkins does this, he says "we are gratefully lucky to be here" and that any theory about life after death is gratuitous and unnecessary. Furthermore A. J. Ayer, a logical positivist, says that to talk of life after death is meaningless as it cannot be proved nor is there any evidence for it. Building on this

Anthony Flew ~~says~~ ~~said~~ said that life and death are "mutually exclusive categories" and to talk about ~~them~~ life after death is like talking of "dead survivors".

~~Then~~ Due to these criticisms one can easily

Conclude that there are problems with believing in life after death but due to prior faith ~~and~~ some people feel this can overcome these problems and face the problems of which ~~mentioned~~ ~~of~~ the theory of life mentioned of which theory of life after death is most compelling.



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Examiner Comments

This is a strong response to part (ii) in which the candidate has immediately drawn attention to the wording of the question and has organised their material so they can use it to target the demand of the question. Even though they focus on the problems, they are prepared to consider an alternative view in their final paragraph, and this is quite adequate.



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Examiner Tip

The candidate has used the wording of the question to legitimise the use of material they have prepared. Don't be afraid to do this. See the first sentence of this essay part (ii).

Question 2 (b)

Question 2 (b) Religious Language

This open ended question invited candidates to use any approach to religious language they had studied, and students were generally happy to deal with cognitive/non-cognitive language, analogy, language games, myth and symbol, and verification and falsification. Some dealt with the *via negativa* to good effect. Very few compared and contrasted in a conspicuous manner, but excellent use was made particularly of material on myth and symbol, showing a real improvement in this area from previous years. Although verification and falsification is always popular, many candidates chose other approaches to religious language here. Some responded by saving verification and falsification until part (ii), which was an effective approach. Candidates who chose verification and falsification were generally more adept at comparing and contrasting. Most candidates were aware of the meaning of 'indispensable', and made a conspicuous effort to use the term in part (ii). Others simply saw this part of the question as an opportunity to outline strengths and weaknesses of types of religious language, so missed the point at hand. Candidates whose understanding of the religious language debate focused on whether it was meaningless found this challenging, as they were compelled to concentrate on arguments for and against Ayer's approach to language. Although cross fertilisation with the anthology passages is much to be encouraged, it must not limit students in how far they are prepared to discuss the wider issue of religious language.

In the box, state whether you are answering part(a) or part(b). **B**

(i) The main problem with religious language is whether it is meaningless or not? Religious language uses the imperfect to describe the perfect and the empirical to describe the non-empirical. There are two types of language: Realist language which uses factual assertions ^{for example David Cameron is prime minister} and non-realist language which is not considered factually for example "Jesus is the light of the world"

The verification principle is stemmed from a group of philosophers known as logical positivists from the "vienna circle" they applied maths and science to religious language to decide whether it is meaningless. In this strong form of the verification principle, statements were considered to be either analytic such as

"All circles are round" (tautology) or $2+2=4$. Or they are synthetic statements such as "Roses are Red" which can be established via empirical evidence. If a statement ~~is~~ doesn't fit either type then it is "cognitively meaningless". A slight problem was that some statements considered meaningful were rejected such as "I love you" and Henry 8th had 6 wives which led to Ayer's weak form of the verification principle, where he allowed such statements as they can be verified via a meaningful source. However Ayer still coined the term God as a meaning~~ful~~^{less} statement as "The notion of an non-empirical being is not an intelligible notion at all".

The Vienna circle were influenced by Wittgenstein who originally believed that if something can be pictured it exists in his picture theory of language. Hume stated if it cannot be ~~sp~~ spoken about then "commit it to the flames". However Wittgenstein changed his mind and then created language games where language is meaningful in a certain "form of life" as the "meaning is in the use".

In contrast there is the falsification principle which came about due to the demise of the verification principle.

Anthony Flew used wisdoms parable to show how religious believers do not allow for their claims to be falsified. They merely alter the description so that their beliefs cannot be proven false. Constantly qualifying their statements means for Hume that religious language "dies a death of a 1000 qualifications" and is complete evidence for the sceptic.

Flew adapted wisdoms parable by adding traps such as blood hounds and floodlights and electric fences. The religious believer remains unconvinced when no evidence is found and simply states that the gardener who tends the plot of land at night must be "intangible, invisible and insensitive to electric shocks" whereas an atheist would state what is the difference between an invisible gardener? and no gardener at all?

There are similarities and differences to the verification principle and falsification principle. Both of them are sceptical of religious language and argue it is meaningless or people do not allow it to be falsified. Falsification merely carries on the argument of verification.



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Examiner Comments

This is an efficient response to the question, ending up as a competent compare/contrast approach to verification and falsification, but the candidate started off more promisingly by referring to two types of language - realist and non-realist. The essay could have developed as a comparison of these two approaches, but it seems as if ultimately, the candidate is more confident with concentrating on the verification and falsification principles.



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Examiner Tip

When you prepare and revise religious language, don't limit your choices, but make sure that you can talk about any of the different types and approaches to religious language in a competent manner and in response to any question you may be asked.

Question 3 (a)

Question 3(a) - Virtue Ethics option

Good candidates recognised that Virtue Ethics was concerned with addressing the issue of "What sort of person should I become?" Aristotle was interested in defining good people, the virtues that make them good and cultivating identified virtues so that humans can achieve their ultimate aim of eudaimonia. Good candidates were able to coherently link together the several aspects of Virtue Theory together. They recognised the importance of Aristotle's concept of the soul and how the concept of the soul was linked to the different types of virtues. They were able to demonstrate their knowledge and understanding of the moral and intellectual virtues including the doctrine of the mean and how these virtues were fostered through habit or instruction. Able candidates also recognised the importance of 'perfect' friendships in helping to foster these virtues and how the development of the virtues could lead to the development of better communities. Weaker candidates often included irrelevant material such as a detailed historical background of Aristotle or simply wrote all they knew about Virtue theory. For example they stated that the doctrine of the mean applied to both the intellectual and moral virtues which is not the case – it applies to the moral virtues only. Good candidates were able to recognise that many modern scholars agreed with Aristotle's idea that morality should be based on the development of the virtues including MacIntyre, Ansecombe, Franklin, Foot and Nussbaum. They were able to give reasons or evidence as to why this would be advantageous including the fact that Virtue Theory allows humankind to flourish. They were able to demonstrate why others rejected this claim. For example Kant stated that the development of the virtues cannot be the supreme goal of morality because even an evil person could sometime act in a courageous manner. For part ii weaker candidates often failed to address the question and their answers were simplistic arguing that Virtue Ethics helps make you a good person or that it doesn't give you clear guidelines to follow.

In the box, state whether you are answering part(a) or part(b). a

Virtue Ethics is an ethical theory that is based on the virtuous nature of actions themselves rather than the outcomes of actions. Aristotle put forward the idea that every human is trying to reach a state of eudaimonia; the state of ultimate happiness. This is achieved by becoming a virtuous person by following the Golden Mean of virtues, by following role models and using the virtues in every situation to achieve eudaimonia.

The 'Golden Mean' is an important feature of virtue ethics. In order to be the most virtuous person it is important to not following the extremes of the virtues. For example, do not be shy/timid or overconfident but be confident because that is the 'Golden Mean' between the two extremes.

Following on, it is important to have virtuous role models in order to live a virtuous life. Role models allow us to know how to be

virtues and which decisions to take.

Also, an action is good if the virtues are followed regardless of what the outcome of the action is. This is very important as what makes virtue ethics different from many other ethical ~~the~~ theories is that it is not consequentialist. It is also based entirely on the individual and ~~at~~ each individual's strive to achieve the ultimate ~~state~~ state of happiness by following the virtues.

Virtue Ethics is an important theory that focuses on ~~creating~~ moulding people into far better humans by presenting a guideline of virtues to follow and a way to make ethical decisions.

(ii) Virtue Ethics is a useful theory as a guideline to moral living as it encourages people to be the best that they can be and use the 'Golden Mean' to make sure that people are behaving in a 'good and virtuous' way. It is also not linked with religion which means that ~~is~~ it is a theory that is open to all and can be followed by all.

However, although following the virtues of prudence, justice appears good and worthwhile there are serious flaws with the theory.

Firstly, how do we know which virtues take precedence over

each other? there are undoubtedly situations where a conflict of ~~virtues~~ virtues will arise and there is no room in the Virtue Ethics for choosing between virtues.

furthermore, regardless of which virtues are greater than others Virtue Ethics seems to go against our intrinsic feeling of moral decision making. By nature, we make decisions on a consequentialist viewpoint and Virtue Ethics instead focuses entirely on the good of the action rather than the consequence. for example, it may be necessary to lie in order to protect someone's life - would this be considered virtuous? No. This is a ~~big~~ major stumbling block for Virtue Ethics and stops it being useful in ~~the~~ every situation.

There is also the issue of role models. As nobody is perfect then how do we have a virtuous role model? People's opinions on good role models are also very different making meaning that if everyone followed their own role model not everyone would be happy and eudomonia ~~is~~ is unachievable.

On the surface, Virtue Ethics appears like a good ethical theory to make decisions but it has serious flaws that stop it from being useful as a guideline to moral living. It does contain useful points and we should aim to follow the ~~more~~ virtues but the virtues should not come before the consequences of our actions.



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Examiner Comments

A simple response and it's easy to see how this candidate could have substantiated their response much more fully in both parts of the question.

Question 3 (a)

Question 3(a) Deontology

Many candidates were able to explain the major features of Kant's deontological approach to ethics based on duty, good will and rationality. They stated why Kant was opposed to morality being based on consequences or emotional responses. They were able to clearly distinguish between a hypothetical imperative and a categorical imperative and explained why Kant said only the latter were important. Sound responses clearly demonstrated their understanding of the three forms of the categorical imperative by using examples. Many of the higher level responses were even able to successfully explain why Kant saw moral statements as being 'a priori synthetic' and that he saw the supreme goal for humans as the achievement of the 'summum bonum'. They also referred to Kant's three postulates of pure practical reason – autonomy, immortality of the soul and the necessary existence of God. Weaker responses often made common errors including stating that Kant did not believe in God and/or that he supported both hypothetical and categorical imperatives. They also tended to refer to 'reason' as meaning having 'a reason to act' rather than morality being based on rational thought. Many were unable to give more than one form of the categorical imperative and often failed to show any understanding of the three forms of the categorical imperative – particularly the 'Formula of the Kingdom of Ends'. For Part (ii) some good responses focussed on the question set and were able give strong arguments (supported by reason or evidence) both for and against the effectiveness of the theory as a guideline for moral living. Arguments for included the fact that Kant's maxim of universality protects human rights and his deontological approach is similar to that of Natural Law, so it could be supported by some religious believers. Whilst others said that a deontological approach like this appears to be cold and heartless and fails to consider any exceptions based on the situation that people find themselves in. Good responses often recognised that Ross' development of Kant's theory goes some way to overcome the issue of conflicting duties. Weaker responses were often only able to give very simplistic reasons as to why duty and rational thought might or might not be an excellent basis for morality. For example they stated that Kant failed to consider emotions or consequences or that his deontological approach was good as it provided rules to follow. They did not make the most of the opportunity to compare or contrast Kant's with the other religious and ethical outlooks studied at AS level.

This straightforward question produced a range of responses and this is one of the best due to its clear, coherent structure. It is easy to follow and conveys a strong sense that the candidate knew exactly what they were doing.

In the box, state whether you are answering part(a) or part(b).

i) Deontology is an approach to ethics that judges the morality of an action. It is analytic and a priori (based on logic rather than experience). It was developed by Immanuel Kant, who stated that an action is good if we know it to be so beyond dispute. Also, a good action must be performed as a moral duty, an obligation or as a moral OUGHT (as in, "one ought to do so", rather than "one wants to do so").

He outlined three primary characteristics a good action must have. First, it must be done impartially, objectively and non-preferentially - as a good action is aimed at indiscriminately aiding others. Second, it must be done freely - an autonomous moral agent should be able to act free of any external

coercion or persuasion (including the mandate of God).

Third, the action must be universalisable - an action that ~~can~~ can be performed regardless of the individuals involved or circumstance, since the action must be intrinsically valuable (of itself) rather than instrumentally valuable (of its outcome).

Kant said that any action with these characteristics is a categorical imperative, as opposed to a ~~hypothetical~~ hypothetical imperative (for example, "be kind" rather than "be kind to impress someone"). He outlined the allegory of the prudent and moral shopkeepers as an example - the former who lowers prices to increase his ~~as~~ number of customers and thus his profits, and the latter who does the same in order to be fair to his customers.

In order to further clarify his argument, Kant laid down the four formulae of right action. These are:

- 1) the law of nature - act in a way that you will it could become law ("do unto others as you would have done unto you")
- 2) the law of ends - treat people as ends rather than as means to an end
- 3) the kingdom of ends - act as though ruler of a land in which all you do becomes

law and which everyone will obey, so that you cannot justify acting badly

4) law of autonomy - act free of all things, including the law of the Church.

Kant stated that the ultimate goal of morality must be a state in which truth and virtue are the prevailing features. He named this the *summum bonum* ("highest good" - latin) and said that, "the *summum bonum* is only possible on the presupposition of the immortality of the soul".

W.D. Ross attempted to further clarify the argument with the introduction of his seven *prima facie* duties ("above all" - latin). Ross believed that a "good moral upbringing" equipped a person with sufficient intuition to decide which of these duties takes precedence in any given situation. He defined intuition as reason coupled with experience. The *prima facie* duties are: fidelity, reparation, gratitude, justice, beneficence, non-maleficence, and self-improvement. To give an example, if forced to choose who to save from a fire, a family member or a doctor with the cure for cancer, one could apply the *prima facie* duties to clearly choose - since Kant's formulae do not outline what to do in specific circumstances.

ii) There are several issues, both in favour and against, using deontology as a guideline for moral living. In its favour, it allows the individual to make quick choices in an extreme situation. It makes it obvious what is right and what is wrong and thus means that one can know instantly if an action is the wrong course to take.

Also, it places a high regard on equality, as it insists on treating all people as ends rather than means, thus making all valuable intrinsically rather than ~~merely~~ merely valuable for what they might offer the individual acting. Not only that, but deontology requires the individual to act in a manner beyond external control, thus meaning that no-one can influence a decision that one is making. This means that an action performed by a deontologist is less likely to harm anyone, since the only person at fault, if harm should befall someone is the deontologist himself.

However, other issues complicate the matter. Kant assumes that duties never conflict and thus does not account for the eventuality that a deontologist might have to choose between more than one viable option. For example, his prudent shopkeeper, in increasing his profits, might be able to increase his staff's salary.

Kant fails to outline whether this then makes his reason for acting acceptable. Similarly, if the moral shopkeeper, in fastidiously being fair to his customers, is unable to fully support his family's financial needs, deontology does not state whether this makes his seemingly honourable intentions for acting unacceptable.

Ross' assumption is that intuition is sufficient to guide an individual through a moral dilemma, but he does not account for the differences between individuals' intuitions. If one person believes that an action is right, another might believe it is wrong (for example, working on the Sabbath), and thus his prima facie duties do not clarify the issue ~~but~~ by making it easier but rather add a layer of unnecessary and non-functional complexity.

Finally, it is unreasonable for Kant to require an action to be universalisable. If it is good to act in the moment it need not be nullified by it being bad to act in the same way in a different moment. Holding doors open for a person is good, but it is not nullified by the fact that you shouldn't hold a door open for a fleeing bank robber.

In conclusion, deontology simplifies issues

but fails to account for differences in individuals, circumstances and the morality of actions. Thus it is not an effective guideline for moral living.



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Examiner Comments

Note the good balance between the two parts - the candidate has managed their time very well. They make good use of their knowledge of the theory and they keep an eye on the demands of the question. The quality of language is excellent.



ResultsPlus

Examiner Tip

You don't have to write complicated or highly intellectual answers to do well. You simply have to know the material and communicate it effectively as this candidate has done.

Question 3 (b)

Question 3(b) Natural Moral Law

The candidates who attempted this question were able to make the most of the opportunities offered by it. Part (i) was in most cases successful. Generally candidates were able to present a coherent account of the theory. They recognised that Aquinas saw rational thought as a God-given ability. They demonstrated how reason can be used to identify and apply the primary and secondary precepts, to distinguish between real and apparent goods and between interior/exterior acts. They also were able to link these ideas to the virtues and types of law identified by Aquinas. Many were also able to demonstrate their understanding through the use of well-chosen evidence and/or examples. Some candidates often spent too long on the Aristotelian background to Aquinas' Natural Moral Law at the expense of developing the theory itself. Whilst the primary precepts were frequently dealt with accurately, the secondary precepts were often not exemplified or understood by some candidates. 'Real' and 'apparent' goods were also often confused with 'interior' and 'exterior' acts. Some candidates simply listed the strengths and weakness of Natural Moral Law.

In part (ii) however, many candidates did not even attempt to answer the question set, and answered without regard for NML at all, although it is a very straightforward connection to make. Rather, they offered a prepared answer on the critiques of the link between religion and morality, based largely around the ideas of Richard Dawkins. Candidates could only gather a few marks for this approach, similarly for those candidates who ignored the question entirely and wrote a complete essay entirely on critiques.

It cannot be stressed firmly enough that Centres and candidates cannot expect to achieve good results by second guessing the paper and setting limitations on what they prepare. Any of the ethical theories could appear as stand alone questions, or with either/or choices, or could be linked with religion and morality. Furthermore, a stand alone question on religion and morality is always possible, but can never be guaranteed.

Question 4 (a)

Question 4(a) Justice, law and punishment

Despite a few strong responses to this question, it continues to be the least popular and to attract some of the weakest responses. Some candidates combined justice and punishment rather than follow the instructions in the question to make a choice, and responses tended to be either full of scholarly reference or completely lacking in scholarly detail, such as good use of Nozick's idea of Justice as Entitlement v. Rawl's idea of Justice as Fairness. Law & punishment received its fair share of GCSE level descriptions about capital punishment and various methods of punishments metered out by society. Law wasn't covered so comprehensively, whereas Justice garnered some Plato background facts on occasion and Hobbes, Locke and Mill featured well in stronger essays. Part (ii) was poorly addressed or omitted sometimes. Some responses showed that candidates had considered the concepts as part of the topic as a whole and had no problem in relating them to justice, law & punishment. But others struggled to explain them and so struggled to relate them to the topics from part (i). Most understood the concepts in a generic way and relativism was mostly associated with cross cultural issues to express divergent views.

In the box, state whether you are answering part(a) or part(b). A

Justice can be defined as gaining equality for all. Plato suggested that Justice was an expression of health as if ~~that~~ is what's required to create an ordered society. Whilst he accepted that in a natural state people are concerned for their own well being, if we put that aside then we can make society a better place.

For Plato, injustice was a sickness. However, whilst in societies we all strive for Justice, ~~is~~ can it always be fully achieved? Augustine believed that you couldn't have one absolute rule for justice as many people's needs were different ~~ing~~. and so ~~is~~ this means we may possibly have to adopt a utilitarian view when it comes to justice and see what is good for the greatest

number. Marx believed that Justice was based on giving everybody an equal opportunity even if it meant doing things such as taking the rich more to exchequer the poor to be educated and become more useful members of society.

Others such as Hume believed that there is automatically injustice in the world as we're not all born equal. For example, people may be disadvantaged in intelligence, looks, genetics and this isn't dependent upon society.

This is why justice is seen as being difficult to achieve. E.g. In punishment, some may see capital punishment as being justice for those that criminal has wronged yet others such as Colson would argue for restorative justice. Justice is also very much dependent on the severity of those crimes in this case as there cannot be absolute justice.

In conclusion, justice is a concept that is very much needed in society in order for it to function but there is still inequality as not everybody can agree on to what extent things are just or not.

ii) In objectivity and relativism, they would look at how justice is something that can be implemented without change for others. For example Justice cannot be achieved for all as there are too many ~~intrinsic~~ intrinsic inequalities in circumstances. If we apply an objective view towards that then ~~the~~ justice would be absolute and we would not be able to alter it for those who may need it and may be in more vulnerable positions as Augustine says that ~~it~~ there cannot be one type of justice as each person has different needs.

If we have objectivity then Marx's example of the rich getting taxed more would be eradicated as it would be ~~is~~ unjust for them and this means that it would be just having the poor worse access to education as they wouldn't be taking anything from the rich.

Criminal justice would also have issues. Many cases are determined by the severity of the crime and how it would affect the victim's family, if objectivity was involved then this would mean that ~~both~~ both the rights and justice of the two parties would need to be met and this would cause problems

as it may not be the victims family who feels a sense of justice, which leaves the question of true justice if we were to look at this objectively as it needs to be altered in many cases and put down to the person and their situation. Eg. a criminal arguably doesn't deserve the freedom and justice a law abiding citizen does.

In conclusion, it can potentially be dangerous for objectivity and relativism if placed in line with a serious issue such as justice. We cannot look at these things objectively/relatively without it causing major implications as it cannot be absolute and true for all cases. Therefore, it's better to look at justice through a subjective point of view in order to achieve the ~~best~~ ~~through~~ best justice possible for all in society.



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Examiner Comments

A reasonably successful answer to part (ii) which is characteristic of many candidates' attempts to link these concepts with justice, law and punishment. Some use of scholarship has been made and the broad concepts understood.



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Examiner Tip

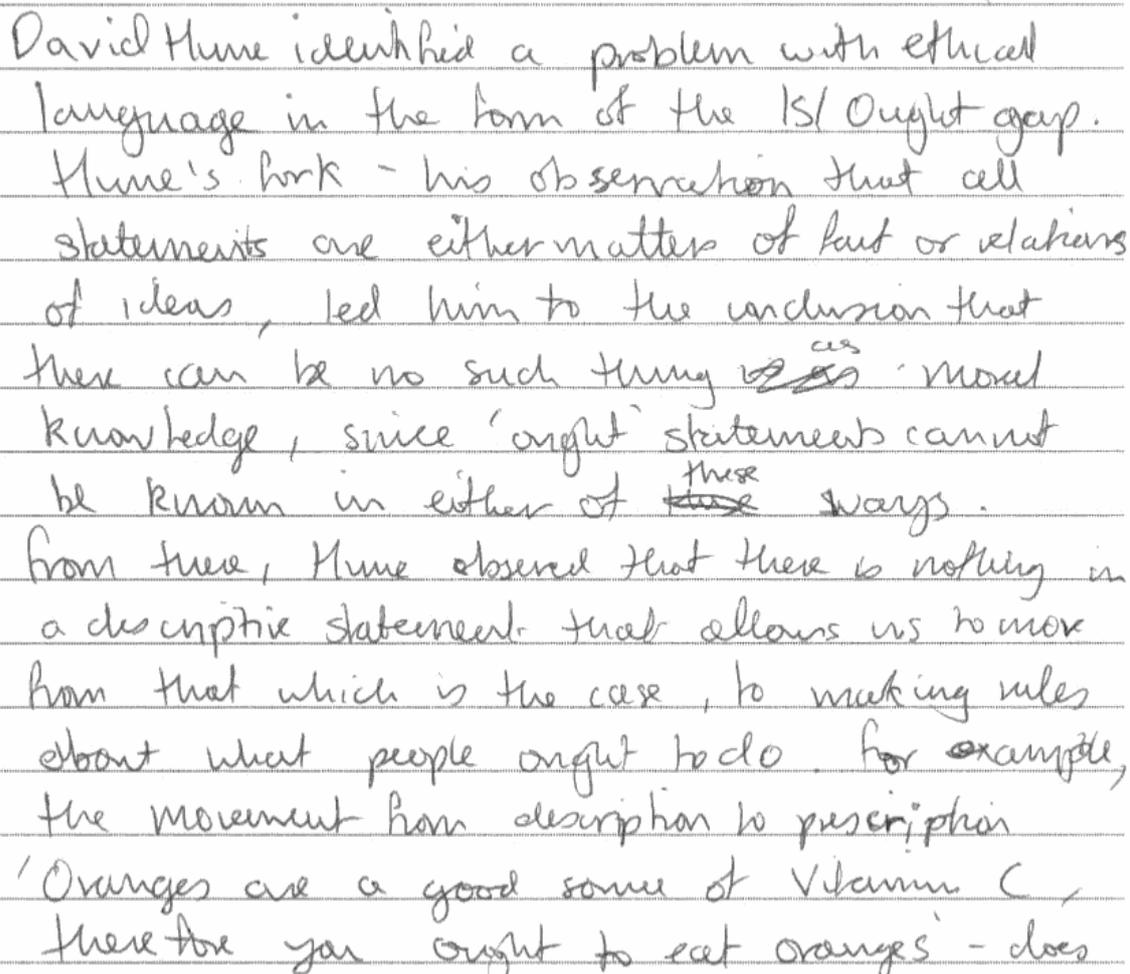
Candidates must ensure that they have a solid basis of scholarly material to use to answer questions on these topics so they do not have to resort to generic evaluation on the spot in the exam.

Question 4 (b)

Question 4(b) Ethical Language

Of the two choices for Q4, this question saw some of the stronger responses. Sound responses were able to demonstrate a clear understanding of and engaged with various problems in the use of ethical language. Strong responses engaged successfully with the concept of 'good'. Others explored the development of Emotivism through the work of Hume and the Logical Positivists. They were comfortable with the 'verification principle' together with the terms 'analytical', 'synthetic' and 'meaningless' statements. Some candidates recognised that Ayer saw ethical statements as non-factual - simply an expression of emotion and that his work was later developed by Stevenson and again by Hare's Prescriptivism. They also paid attention to the second part of the question and recognised the extent that problems arising might be solved. Similarly intuitionism was addressed confidently and understood in terms of making moral decisions. Weaker responses tended only to refer to Emotivism in general terms and referred to it as the 'boo/hurrah' theory without explaining why it is often called this, implying in some cases that this was Ayer's own term for it. Some candidates also confused the terms 'analytical' and 'synthetic' statements. The naturalistic fallacy was a favourite of many candidates although not always fully understood within its context and milieu. Some responses revealed confusion between religious and ethical language, and whilst some candidates managed to keep material to use in part (ii) for evaluation, others repeated material from part (i) without adding much evaluative comment. Some candidates found a successful approach to be to reserve intuitionism until part (ii) and discuss its success or otherwise as a solution to the problems of ethical language.

The open nature of this question gave candidates plenty of opportunity to explore a range of approaches to the problems of ethical language, although emotivism did feature prominently.



David Hume identified a problem with ethical language in the form of the Is/Ought gap. Hume's work - his observation that all statements are either matters of fact or relations of ideas, led him to the conclusion that there can be no such thing ^{as} moral knowledge, since 'ought' statements cannot be known in either of ~~these~~ ^{these} ways. From there, Hume observed that there is nothing in a descriptive statement that allows us to move from that which is the case, to making rules about what people ought to do. For example, the movement from description to prescription 'Oranges are a good source of Vitamin C, therefore you ought to eat oranges' - does

not work, since whilst the first part of the sentence belongs to the factual, empirically verifiable domain of language, the second part does not. The issue of this, the movement from prescription to description, ~~is~~ is equally flawed, in that it attempts to logically describe a situation which ~~log~~ then logically dictates what an individual is obliged to do.

Normative theories of ethics, such as utilitarianism and deontology, attempt to define a set standard ~~of def~~ or definition of good upon which to build an ethical framework. However, G. E. Moore argued that 'good' was problematic in that it was ~~indefinable~~ ^{un-}an indefinable and simple concept, like the colour yellow - it cannot be described in terms of anything else. Moore argued that any ethical theories which tried to identify 'good' with another concept were guilty of committing the 'naturalistic fallacy'. 'Good is good, and that is the end of the matter' - G. E. Moore.

A further problem comes from Logical Positivist A. J. Ayer, who in his book *Language, Truth and Logic* argued that ethical language was

problematic in that it could not be said to have any cognitive meaning, since it could not be subject to empirical verification.

Ayer reduced all moral talk to a mere expression of the speaker's feelings, arguing that when we make a value judgement such as 'Abortion is wrong' we are in fact uttering no more than the word 'Abortion' followed by an ejaculation of our personal feelings. We may as well have said 'Abortion - boo!' or 'hurrah!'. respectively, hence the namesake of Ayer's outlook as the Hurrah/Boo theory of ethics.

ii) Ayer's solution was to claim that ethical statements had a ^{non} cognitive or anti-realist significance only - their subjective nature meant they were useful for telling us about the feelings or mental states of an individual or group, but little else.

Ayer maintained that ethical statements were not designed to be factual, but instead to evoke an emotional response in the hearer so as to make them sympathetic to the speaker's cause. 'Exhortations to moral virtue are not propositions ... but ... commands ^{designed} to

provoke the reader to action of ~~some~~ certain sort.

While this may seem a neat solution, it has some troubling implications for society, in that a lack of moral objectivity leaves us with no basis on which to create laws - how can a judge hope to ~~condemn~~ ^{condemn} a capitalist to jail if in the courtroom, he is able to utter a sentence with no more significance than 'ape-boo!'.

Moore's solution was to advocate a system of intuitionism, which claims that ethical values cannot be defined ~~to~~ but can only be known directly through intuition. Intuitionism moreover points to the idea of a common morality, observing that many people intuit the same response to a moral situation and so it is possible to reach a consensus.

The problem remains however that ~~we are~~ we still have no ~~empirical~~ means of judging whose ethical ^{intuition} ~~opinion~~ is should take precedence*. If a clear consensus is not present, we are once again left with no viable cause of moral action beyond the realm of personal opinion.

* over anyone else

To conclude, we can see that there are no easy solutions to problems of ethical ^{language}. The ethically non-naturalist theories we have seen may avoid the naturalistic fallacy, but still lead us no closer to an objective, ^{agreeable} ~~agreeable~~ standard of morality. Emotivism ^{may} ~~does~~ seem to have become popular in recent years like a ~~very~~ reasonable, ^{reasonable} way to approach ethical language, but at the same time it draws us further away from an ordered society. As Alastair MacIntyre put it, ~~exact~~ with the rise of emotivism 'morality has, to a large extent, disappeared ... and this represents a grave cultural loss'.



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Examiner Comments

The whole essay is included here as an example of a solid response which reveals a good range of knowledge, good exam practice - both parts of the question approached in relation to the question and in reasonable detail - and a good use of scholarship. Although there are other ways of approaching this essay, this has worked well.



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Examiner Tip

The candidate has included an excellent quotation to end their essay. This is a very useful device which lends a real air of authority to your writing.

Question 5 (a)

Question 5(a) The Reign of Ashoka

This was an extremely popular question with candidates. A significant proportion of responses examined in some detail biographical information concerning Asoka's life, with little or no application to the question. Sound responses were able to explore the role of Asoka in the missionary journeys and the impact his reign had upon Indian society. Such responses used a wide range of scholars to debate this impact and were able to identify scholarly disagreement. Generally part (ii) was answered better than (i). Candidates focused well on scholarly disputes concerning whether or not Asoka was a genuine Buddhist or used the religion to consolidate his reign. Discussions focused on the edicts and whether or not they were peculiarly Buddhist. Many candidates came to very definite and well argued conclusions. Some responses even challenged some of the activities normally accredited to Asoka, such as the missionary journeys and the cleansing of the Sangha.

Question 5 (b)

Question 5 (b) Pure Land and Zen Buddhism

Few candidates attempted this question and those who did so displayed a sound grasp of the main differences between the two schools. Part (ii) was not answered as well with candidates struggling to answer the question: particularly how they can be so different but still belong to the Mahayana.

Question 6 (a)

Question 6 (a) Anicca and Dukkha

This was a relatively popular question and sound responses used a wide range of material from the set texts, particularly King Milinda. This had the advantage of grounding the responses in scripture and provided a structure. Some candidates identified areas of disagreements between scholars, in particular the different English interpretations of Anatta; specifically between Denise Cush and John Peacock. Many of these responses were extremely thorough in their examination of the two ideas and their close relationship in Buddhist Philosophy. Part (ii) was well answered on the whole. Many candidates once again relied heavily on the set texts, but in this question were able to compare and contrast Nirvana in Mahayana and non-Mahayana traditions. Such candidates used both King Milinda and Lotus Sutra to draw a clear distinction.

Question 6 (b)

Question 6(b) - Bodhisattva doctrine

This was an extremely popular question. The better scripts were able to explore the key features of the Bodhisattva doctrine. In particular candidates explained, using Atisa's 3 scopes to highlight the different motivations of religious practice and to focus on the core feature of the Bodhisattva. Candidates also explained the key features of the Bodhisattva path/career to draw a distinction to the Arahant. Some managed to draw out the compassionate motivation for becoming a bodhisattva and the importance of becoming a Buddha for the Mahayana. A number of candidates also made effective use of the Trikaya doctrine and the paradoxes this causes for the Mahayana. Some used this to answer part (ii). This part of the question was not answered as well as part (i). Candidates seemed to struggle with explaining the implications of this doctrine for belief and practice. A significant number simply repeated information already used in part (i). The better scripts identified the myriad of heavenly bodhisattvas which could now be called upon to assist an individual on the religious path and how for many practicing lay Buddhists the practice becomes more akin to a form of theism. Others focused on the new emphasis upon compassion and how this would impact upon practice.

Question 7 (a)

Question 7(a) - Liberation Theology

Responses typically detailed the development and motives behind Liberation Theology which first began in the 1960s in Latin America. References to the treatment of the poor and oppressed in the Old Testament and in Jesus teaching about outcasts and those who misuse wealth were used as the starting point for explaining the roots of the movement. The fact that God and Jesus were seen to be on the side of the poor and oppressed made it clear that their suffering was against God's will and the principles of Christianity in the modern world. Candidates discussed the theology of Gutierrez and the notion of Orthopraxis. Reference to the development of the Base Ecclesial Communities where ordinary people met to pray and discuss the social and political issues were cited as significant. The role of the Catholic Church, namely at the Medellin conference was used to highlight the need to face the problems of oppression of the poor. Responses to part (ii) did recognise that Christianity would have to adapt to the changing needs and circumstances of the modern world. References to Bonhoeffer were used to illustrate that Christianity needed to look at how it reaches out to the poor and oppressed.

Question 7 (b)

Question 7(b) - Christian Practice

Responses tended to concentrate, although not exclusively, on the teachings and significance of Bonhoeffer. A discussion of the historical situation in Nazi Germany was used as a springboard to explain his teachings on the Cost of Discipleship, Grace and the World Come of Age. The behaviour of the Catholic church and its reaction to the Nazi Regime was considered. Other responses centred on the theme of Ecumenism and were answered particularly well. Candidates were able to track the development of the movement and assess its significance for Christianity in the modern world. The aims of the Second Vatican Council which sought to find unity within Christianity as well as to explain Church teaching was used to demonstrate that the ecumenical movement was not without its challenges. The significant agreements on baptism, ministry and Eucharist as well as issues raised by other faiths were discussed.

Question 8 (a)

Question 8(a) The Trinity

A popular question answered well by some but lacked detail and understanding of the material from others. Most responses recognised that the Trinity is a complex doctrine which presents God in a seemingly paradoxical way of both one and three. The extent to which this was developed differentiated the responses. Better responses were able to refer to Barth's idea of the trinity by emphasising its historical and eternal importance for Christians being able to achieve salvation. The idea of God revealing himself as Father and Son and Holy Spirit so that sinful humanity could hear the words of God were alluded to by stronger responses. This view was then contrasted with that of Rahner's two approaches to the Trinity. The Economic Trinity where God reveals himself through history and the Immanent Trinity where the way God is in essence challenges the Tritheistic God were cited as modern challenges to the traditional views. Hence reference to J.L.Mackie.

In part (ii) candidates wrestled with the challenges raised by having to accept the traditional views versus being more open to developments to the concept of The Trinity. The significance for our understanding of the person of Jesus and his divinity were discussed in relation to the process of salvation. Weaker responses lacked scope and tended to be simplistic statements which concentrated on the traditional views of the Trinity.

It is worth noting that a few candidates insisted on writing about the Atonement, although it did not appear on the question paper. Centres are reminded that candidates need to be equipped to respond to a range of questions and should not presuppose what will be on the paper from session to session.

Question 8 (b)

Question 8(b) Set texts on the nature of the church

It was disappointing that some candidates did not feel able to grapple with the set texts in the exam, and oddly, a couple of answers referred to texts which were not on the specification. It would be good to see an improvement in this area in forthcoming sessions.

Question 9 (a)

Question 9(a) Ramakrishna and Dayananda Sarasvati

This was the most popular question, although a few candidates focused too much on part (i) and thus failed to present an evaluation. Some candidates also failed to understand (i) and offered narrative and repetitive descriptions of the reformer, listing stories about Ramakrishna and Dayananda Sarasvati rather than comparing and contrasting the two figures. This was particularly evident in responses which had a pre-prepared feel about them and those which offered brief and generalised responses. Excellent responses highlighted significant features of the Hindu Renaissance and compared key themes such as neo-Vedanta with Hindutva and Visistadvaita whilst lower level essays focussed on the history of Hinduism and failed to address the question.

Question 9 (b)

Question 9(b) Gandhi

This question produced some excellent responses and some candidates offered a clear understanding of the methods Gandhi associated with his campaigns, highlighting the political methods Gandhi used including legal and religious means. A few responses focused only on ahimsa whilst the better responses focused on satyagraha, ahimsa, Gandhi's vow of brahmacharya and Hind Swaraj. Weaker responses offered largely narrative accounts of Gandhi's life and did not include any information about his methods and some relied on pre-prepared essays.

Question 10 (a)

Question 10(a) Atman and Moksha

This question produced some excellent responses which demonstrated candidates knew the Hindu scriptures well and were able to offer an interesting analysis of atman using the set text. Scholarship was evident and generally well-used. Good responses were able to compare and evaluate teachings on life after death from both religions and were able to draw sophisticated conclusions using sound religious terminology. Weaker responses tended to list everything they know about atman lacking any development. For part (ii) sound responses presented a coherent and a sustained critical analysis about the atman from the set text and scholars, although a few candidates for this part focused too much on A01 and thus failed to present an evaluation.

Question 10 (b)

Question 10(b) the Bhagavad Gita

This was a fairly popular question and the quality of answers varied. Many candidates discussed key themes such as dharma, atman, samsara and the role of yoga. A few responses included too many isolated quotations lacking any reference to the question whilst some focused on the story of the Mahabharata and therefore their response to the question was limited. Some responses mentioned the importance of the Bhagavad Gita for Gandhi whilst others highlighted that the Bhagavad Gita was a pioneer for Bhakti movements. Higher level answers were able to highlight the significance of the Bhagavad Gita for ISKON and the use of the Gita in ceremonies and festivals. Good answers were able to compare and evaluate teachings of the Bhagavad Gita with Vedic Brahmanism. Candidates should note that for higher marks, scholarly views need to be included and a strong conclusion drawn.

Question 11 (a)

Question 11(a) Sunni and Shi'ah Islam

The majority of responses demonstrated a sound knowledge of the Rightly Guided Caliphs and the different attitudes of Muslims towards them. All but the weakest responses were able to explain the Sunni/Shi'ah split and its significance. Whilst some responses concentrated upon giving a descriptive history of the time, responses achieving marks in the higher levels reflected good knowledge with appropriate comment relating to the various events in the period that contributed to 'the most significant schism....of Islam'. These responses related closely to the question and demonstrated how the events culminated in the development of the two main Muslim groups. For part (ii) only responses achieving marks in the higher levels successfully explained the concept of Muslim authority and discussed how these were different for Sunni and Shi'ah groups. Many candidates listed or described general differences between Sunni and Shi'ah but did not discuss these.

Question 11 (b)

Question 11(b) Islam in the modern world

This question was answered by a smaller number of candidates and only a minority of responses focused closely upon the question and demonstrated a good knowledge and understanding of belief and practice of Sunni or Shi'ah Islam in a Muslim State. Weaker responses described Shi'ah or Sunni beliefs and practices generally, without relating these to actual practices and laws in a specific state. This section was answered competently by relatively few candidates who mastered their material confidently to describe and comment upon the way that the religion in the particular State contributes to an understanding of Islam in the modern world. Some simply repeated some information from part (i) whilst others omitted this section.

Question 12 (a)

Question 12(a) Allah

The standard of answers to this question was variable. Some candidates achieving marks in the higher levels, demonstrated an excellent knowledge of the Qur'an's teaching about Allah as the creator and sustainer who continues to rule the universe. These responses reflected a good knowledge and understanding of the Qu'ran with an ability to examine the ideas presented and some candidates made reference to the comments of various scholars. Weaker responses either paraphrased words from the Qu'ran or gave an outline of the general teaching about Allah without examining these. In part (ii) stronger responses linked Muslim belief and practice to the ideas examined in (i) and discussed these, making reference to tawhid, shirk, predestination and freewill. Some weaker responses described a variety of Muslim beliefs and practices without discussion.

Question 12 (b)

Question 12(b) Sufism

Candidates produced responses that reflected a sound basic knowledge of the various beliefs and practices of the Sufis. Those gaining marks in the higher levels examined the diverse emphases thoroughly, structured their detailed responses carefully and focused upon the question. Stronger responses answered part (ii) well and discussed various viewpoints concerning Sufism's contribution to the development of Islam. Other responses described some negative and positive features of Sufism without discussing them.

Question 13, 14, 15 & 16

There were insufficient responses to these questions to be able to make any helpful observations.

Question 17 (a)

Question 17(a) Kingdom of God in Luke

Most candidates opted to describe parables of the kingdom highlighting common themes such as the ideas of the kingdom being present and in the future, and available to all including the gentiles. Concepts of being prepared and demonstrating good moral behaviour were used to demonstrate Lukan portrayal of Jesus teaching. Better responses were able to show understanding of realised eschatology where the kingdom is seen to be present in the person and ministry of Jesus as opposed to Sanders' view that the kingdom is coming in the distant future following judgement. Part (ii) was not particularly well answered as candidates did not relate the significance of the teaching to the period after Jesus' ascension. Instead responses concentrated on the accessibility of the kingdom for all. Repetition of material from part (i) about realised eschatology was often employed here.

Prologue to the Fourth Gospel

This was a popular question, which for the most part was answered well. Candidates emphasised how the author of the Fourth Gospel declared Jesus as God himself and identified that the Logos as preexistent with God in Creation. Candidates explored the use of the term logos but some got stuck exploring the philosophical background and leaving little time to develop their understanding of Logos in John's Gospel itself. Many candidates overdo the scholarly contribution to the theme and show more knowledge of their views than of the Fourth Gospel and of Jesus himself. However, candidates invariably made strong links with the Old Testament and the concept of Jesus as replacing and fulfilling Jewish scriptures was explained. Themes of light and dark were used to show that the Word which is Christ is the only source of spiritual knowledge compared to the meaninglessness of darkness. Some responses related this to the future conflict which Jesus had with the Jews. Part (ii) had mixed responses with many responses going off the point and discussing the historical and exegetical reasons behind the prologue. Comments were made about how the theology in the prologue is reflected in the gospel in particular in Jesus ministry, eg the wedding in Cana where Jesus is seen to be replacing Judaism. Other instances where Jesus declared his identity as the way to the Father were alluded to. For the most part responses commented on the fact that the Prologue summed up the the whole of the Gospel and was sufficient in itself for an understanding of Jesus Christ as equal to God.

Question 17 (b)

Question 17(b) Purpose of Luke's Gospel OR the Fourth Gospel

This was a reasonably popular question answered from both Luke and John perspectives. Candidates generally gave full and well ordered accounts here for both John and Luke although the depth of Lucan responses was somewhat less than for John. Candidates were able to demonstrate greater knowledge and depth of ideas and technical vocabulary in relation to John than Luke. Candidates considered the cultural and social influences of the time and how they reflected on the purposes of the gospels. Historical and theological truths about Jesus and his mission were brought out. Underlying purposes such as who the gospel was intended for were cited as important for the content included in the gospel. For John verse 20:31 was used to demonstrate Jesus' unique relationship with God as Father and Son who came to bring salvation for humanity. The importance of worship and spirit were highlighted in discussions about the divinity of Christ.

For Luke, candidates considered the address to Theophilus as one of the main purposes, emphasising the Roman background and Lucan interest in the gentile mission. This was supported by references to Jesus involvement with Roman Officials and the Gentile healings in the gospel. Candidates were able to demonstrate good textual knowledge of the gospels and also referred to scholarly debate on the purposes of the gospels. Some tended to lapse into an account of the purposes and did not critically reflect on the relevance for an understanding of the gospels. In part (ii) most agreed that knowing the purposes of the gospel did aid our understanding of the meaning but response here varied widely. Some responses had not much idea how to link 'purpose' to 'meaning' and in many cases forged only tenuous links. In the case of weaker responses it was typical to repeat what they had said in part (i) or just to continue adding material relevant to part (i) of the question. This was particularly well done in reference to John with key ideas inherent in the text about Jesus' identity and purpose for salvation. The concept of universal salvation indicating the future spread of Christianity was touched on by a few who chose the Lucan perspective. There was still a tendency to provide a single answer addressing parts (i) and (ii) together and this often reflected the use of 'pre-prepared answers' delivered regardless of the question format. This kind of response did expose a lack of understanding by some candidates who did not answer the question.

Question 18 (a)

Question 18 (a) Conflict with religious and political authorities

This was the most popular of the questions in the New Testament option. Most responses did well here whether using Lucan or Johannine material although some did fall into the trap of giving an account of Jesus' involvement with the religious authorities. When they did engage with the question, responses tended to take the line that the religious authorities were responsible for Jesus' death rather than the political authorities. Responses generally showed good knowledge of political aspects especially details about Pilate's role in Jesus' death. Candidates used the texts to show how Jesus' attitude to Jewish Laws, for example, the Sabbath day or customs involving outcasts, upset the religious authorities by challenging the very things they fought ferociously to uphold. The understanding of Messianic prophecy which Jesus claimed to be fulfilled in him led to a clash of eschatologies which angered the authorities even more. Here responses used the Cleansing of the Temple to illustrate their point. Most appreciated that political authorities had to be involved to pass the death sentence. Scholars such as Rivkin and Sanders were referred to here. Responses to part (ii) centred around the premise that Jesus had to die and knew all along that this was his mission for the salvation of humanity. The extent of the authority of the Sanhedrin was analysed by some, hence going off the point. Better responses considered how the conflict situations in the texts disseminated information about the nature of Jesus as Son of God and the meaning behind his teachings. The inevitability of the Roman Imperial system was used to further show that Jesus had to die. Stronger responses were able to link conflict to several incidents in Jesus' life. Some were able to give a perspective on the meaning of those conflicts in terms of the challenge they presented to the authorities and the way in which such conflicts furthered aspects of replacement theology. It is worth noting that some responses were particularly general, to the extent that no reference was made to which gospel was being discussed and it was left to the examiner to work it out.

Question 18 (b)

Question 18(b) Crucifixion and Resurrection

This was a popular question, although more responses were based on the Fourth Gospel than on Luke. Virtually all candidates were able to give three examples of symbolism although the depth to which they were able to explain the symbols and give their significance varied. Stronger responses, for example, were able to make some link between 'lamb of God' and theologies of the atonement. Candidates demonstrated how the crucifixion narratives revealed Jesus as the fulfilment of Old Testament prophecy and eschatological expectation. The concept of Jesus being in control as the righteous sufferer was further shown through the fact that his bones were not broken. This led candidates on to explain the Paschal lamb theology as underpinning the crucifixion narrative. The idea of blood and water as a reflection of spiritual renewal in Jesus was explained in detail, making links with the Old Testament and other episodes in John, eg the cleansing of the leper by the pool. The presence of the Beloved disciple and Jesus' mother at the foot of the cross was noted by some candidates. Others using the Lucan account of the crucifixion made reference to Jesus' innocence and considered his position between two criminals also on crosses, indicating that if you repent and accept Jesus you will be saved. Some responses resorted to a cameo approach and did not distinguish what was particularly a Lucan symbol. These answers were idiosyncratic and generic in style.

Responses to part (ii) on the resurrection were well answered indicating that candidates understood the significance of this event for the immediate Christian community after Jesus' death and for Christianity in the future. Most responses were able to explain the significance of the resurrection in terms of how it was important to complement the death of Christ as the basis of salvation with some going on to explain how it vindicated Jesus' claims to be the Son of God. Most responses were able to come to a definite conclusion and offer opinions of their own based on the evidence of the relevant gospel. The idea of believing without actual physical proof was shown with the appearance to Thomas. The significance of the appearances to the women further showed that Jesus had broken down the barriers between God and man, indicating that by accepting the resurrected Christ humans can have a new relationship with him. Conclusions that the resurrection was the culmination of Jesus ministry were drawn. Better responses debated the actual legitimacy of the resurrection accounts and some preferred to see Jesus' crucifixion as being the most important outcome of his ministry.

Grade Boundaries

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Paper Summary

Overall Centres should be proud of the standards their candidates are producing at A2 level. Centres are urged to take seriously the need to address the question as set and to ensure that candidates are prepared to think on their feet in this respect in the exam. Candidates have a wealth of knowledge at their fingertips and it is sad if they cannot use this to best effect because they are limited by the way in which they are equipped to present it.

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