

Examiners' Report
June 2016

GCE Religious Studies 6RS04 1H

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Introduction

At Standardisation meetings examiners considered three important documents for assessment and marking. First, the General Marking Guidance document sets out the policy of positive marking. Secondly, The Generic Mark Scheme divides each level across both AO1 and AO2 into 3 sublevels and this is helpful to achieve precise marking. Finally, the Indicative Mark Scheme is not intended to be prescriptive but to indicate possible legitimate ways of answering a question. The teams of examiners, by adopting these policies, have a broad and detailed understanding of the assessment process.

There are two fundamental principles for examining this paper based on the assessment objectives:

- One is that in AO1 it is essential to examine the text, noting that there are various ways of achieving this.
- Two is that in AO2 it is essential to answer the full demands of this evaluative objective. This includes: 'Do you agree with the idea(s); justify your point of view and discuss its implications for understanding religion and human experience'.

The source used in this paper was 'The Sikhs: their Religious Beliefs and Practices.' By W.O.Cole and P.S.Sambhi.

Question 1

Good practice regarding AO1:

- Candidates showed evidence of a systematic focus on the passage, noting that this may be achieved via a variety of methods.

Both scripts used in this report demonstrate a close focus on the passage though their material is selected in a different order. The first begins by highlighting the importance of balance between miri and piri for achieving union with God whereas the second examines living the life of a Householder and breaking through self-reliance to achieve oneness with God.

Both scripts reflected an excellent understanding of the source and detailed knowledge of beliefs and practices within Sikhism. Both were able to explain the importance of Guru Nanak's three principles of work, worship and charity for achieving good Karma and a Gurmukh way of life.

Both used specialist vocabulary and explained its meaning such as Guru: from darkness to light; understood and explained the significance of the five treasures and also the importance of avoiding the five thieves which provide a barrier against union with God. They also showed an understanding of the implications of living as a 'lotus in a dirty pond' and focusing on spirituality but ensuring that they remained connected to society.

- Candidates presented synoptic links to the source as a whole, and to related anthologies and to links in other units such as 6RS03.

The candidates used their material from 6RS03 Sikhism that taught about the Gurus and living a Gurmukh way of life. They also referred to other scholars and made links and reference to Ninian Smart and his 'Religious Dimensions' from their anthology.

Good practice in AO2:

- The best answers in part (b) struck a balance between insightful personal engagement with a critical analysis of the implications for understanding religion and human experience.

These candidates were able to explain and discuss their reasons for agreeing with the points made in the passage and were able to emphasise those they considered to be very important such as balance between practical and spiritual. They also demonstrated an awareness of those who disagree or hold a different view referring particularly to those of different sects and were also able to suggest that the focus upon the three principles alone would lead to a limited view point because a knowledge of all the teachings of the Gurus up to and including Guru Granth Sahib were important for a Sikh to gain Mukti.

- There were some excellent answers with sound arguments and thoughtful discussions based on a range of scholarship.

These answers are based upon an excellent knowledge of the Sikh Teaching from Guru Nanak, the Guru Granth Sahib that states that 'sweetness and humility are the essence of all virtues', the Rehat Maryada that highlights the main duties a Sikh must perform, Ninian Smart and the Dimensions of Religion.

Areas for improvement for AO1:

- A comparatively small number paid scant attention to the passage. An examination of the passage is essential, noting that there are various different methods of achieving this.
- Some presented a mere comprehension of the passage with little analysis or comments on significant points.
- Some mentioned a few scholars but at this level there was limited understanding of their contributions.

Areas for improvements for AO2:

- Some answers did little more than express an opinion, making sweeping claims, without supporting justifications using the ideas of scholars.
- More attention could have been given to alternative views of a topic and this is one of the criteria of Level 4.
- There was a limited ability to comprehend the implications for religion and human experience.

1a) In Cole and Sambhi's passage they highlight the importance of having a balance between *min* and *pin* in order to achieve union with god, enlightenment. Furthermore the passage highlights the importance for Sikhs to ~~remain~~ practice the 5th treasures whilst rejecting the 5 thieves.

Cole and Sambhi highlight in the passage that "the principles *kirt karo*, *nam japo* and *rand caico*" is central in one's life. This examines that one must follow the teachings of the Gurus to ensure that they are able to achieve *mukti*. The three principles was put forward by Guru Nanak and is vital in the way of a Sikh life. Through practicing these three principles it allows one to generate good karma and follow a *Gurmukh* way of life. This can be further emphasised as Sikhs are encouraged to give *Daswant*, which is to provide the community or charity with 10% of their earnings. Therefore Cole and Sambhi highlight in the passage the importance of practicing *sewa* which

helps ensure that one can follow a Gurmukh way of life and achieve Parmathma, god.

Furthermore, Cole and Sambhi highlight that the second fundamental concept of Sikh teaching is "that self-reliance (humai) is the greatest enemy of God realization". Here it expresses the importance to draw oneself away from God and follow the teachings of the Gurus to be drawn away from the 5 thieves which would lead one to be a Manmukh person and not break the cycle of samsara. Furthermore, this idea put forward by Cole and Sambhi expresses that through being drawn into humai one cannot achieve mukti and be one with God. However, in Sikhism a person's quest to move from Manmukh to Gurmukh is possible through the grace of God, "remember his true name and relinquish humai" (AG). Here, it demonstrates that through meditating on God's name whether that be through Nam Simran one can achieve mukti. Therefore Cole and Sambhi demonstrate the idea that those engrossed by humai cannot achieve mukti which would lead them to enlightenment.

It is also worth noticing that Cole and Sambhi that humai "manifests itself in the five

enils" and "activities which result from any of these vices should be avoided." This illustrates that through ~~demonstrating that~~ acquiring the 5 thieves proves to be a barrier for a Sikh to achieve union with God. This can be due to the world around one and social pressures to conform. This highlights the idea put forward by Cole and Sambhi as to be in this world and be involved in the society but free from humai and the 5 thieves is difficult. This links to Nirvan Smart's social dimension as it ~~affects~~ affects "institutions and teachings... affects the community in which it finds itself." This is because the teachings in modern world society can have an impact on the teachings within ~~Sikhism~~ the Sikh community. Therefore Cole and Sambhi express the need to remove oneself from the 5 thieves and highlight that ~~this should not~~ Sikhs should refrain from this.

Cole and Sambhi further highlight that a householder is "not... one who has withdrawn from the world". This highlights that one must have a balance between min and

pin as well as ensuring that they follow the other teachings put forward by the Gurus. This stresses the importance of not just focusing on ~~spirit~~ spirituality to achieve ~~for~~ God but also ensure that one remains connected to society in which they can practice the 3 principles. An example of the importance of ~~having~~ having a ~~best~~ balance is seen through Guru Nanak's travel to Tibet in which he stressed to the monks that they also had to involve themselves within society as well. Therefore to be a householder ~~Care~~ and ~~Jambhi~~ ~~highai~~ highlight the importance of having a balance between both ~~min~~ and ~~pin~~.

Furthermore, ~~Care~~ and ~~Jambhi~~ highlight that there is a "requirement to live like a lotus in a dirty pond". Here it highlights that the dirty pond is the world which consists of 5 thieres whilst the lotus is the person. This highlights the importance of one being able to resist the 3 thieres and instead demonstrate the 5 treasures to achieve union with God. Furthermore, it is the journey of one to ~~get to~~ achieve

enlightenment, this can be done through following the Gurus teachings. ~~and~~ ~~at~~ Also the definition of Guru which means darkness to light is further a guide to one being able to travel from the dirty pond to light and enlightenment. Therefore, Cole and Sambhi highlight the importance of one searching for their path and making sure they remain focused on God in order to achieve mukti and achieve ~~sp~~ Parmatma.

Cole and Sambhi further emphasise that "it is easier to turn away from the social responsibilities". Here, it illustrates that one can turn away from societal roles but this would not demonstrate the balance between *miri* and *piri* as well as following the Gurus teachings. An example within Sikhism in which the social responsibility of Guru Tegh Bhadur was evident is when he ~~married~~ chose to be martyred alongside his disciples Mati Das, Sati Das and Dayal Das for the Hindu religion and to prevent Iftar Khan from converting Hindu's into Muslims. This is an example in which it demonstrates that the Gurus

did not move away from responsibilities but accepted them which ensures that for Sikhism there is a path to follow and that this leads to the demonstration of the balance that is needed in this life. Therefore Cole and Sambhi highlight the importance of maintaining social roles as well as spirituality which just emphasises the key concept of *minipli*.

In conclusion, Cole and ~~John~~ Sambhi illustrate in this passage the key ~~concepts~~ concepts within Sikhism and also teachings which is fundamental to one to achieve union with God and ensure they continue to follow on the path to God. Therefore Cole and Sambhi highlight the ~~importance~~ importance of having a balanced life and discovering path to God-realisation.

1b) An idea Cole and Sambhi put forward is that the 3 principles and following these principles "should dominate one's complete life". This suggests that the three principles must be something that all Sikhs adhere and follow. To say that it must "dominate"

expresses the importance as it helps one achieve a balanced life and continue to follow the path of God. However, if the three principles should dominate one's life then it suggests that most of their focus should be dependent on the 3 principles. This ~~rejects~~ I believe that through this idea it does not allow one to focus on other teachings put forward by the Gurus which may just be as important as following the 3 principles, for example gender equality. Therefore I disagree with the argument put forward by Core and Sambhi as it does not reflect that all teachings are as important to achieve mukti and enlightenment.

Core and Sambhi put forward the idea that through the 5 treasures one can achieve enlightenment and that through "practising the virtues of contentment, patience, the service of others and humility" one can be Gurmukh. This illustrates that one would be able to defeat the cycle of samsara if they continue to possess these qualities. This links to N. Smart's

doctrinal dimension as it is an attempt to give "system, clarity and intellectual power". Through highlighting the importance of the 5 treasures it means that one is able to follow the teaching therefore giving system as to how one should achieve enlightenment and further gives clarity in the qualities one must possess to achieve the sixth goal of freedom from the cycle of samsara. Therefore ~~Core and Sambhi~~ highlighting I agree with the idea put forward by Core and Sambhi as it allows one to develop in their path to enlightenment and helps achieve mukti.

Furthermore, another idea put forward by Core and Sambhi is ~~that~~ the acknowledgement that "to be in a world but not attached to it, to radiate beauty and remain pure, is hard". Here Core and Sambhi demonstrate that it is easy to be attached to a world due to pressures and ~~items~~ influences. Through acknowledging this Core and Sambhi ~~do~~ express that for a person in this world the challenge is to remain pure as there are pressures which can have an

impact on one's path and also change one's diversion from Guṁmukh to Manmukh. Through the Renat Manjada, the Sīcher code of conduct and also the Tapji Sahib nichē expresses the key Sikh teachings one can attempt and follow the path of God. ~~at~~ Therefore I agree with the argument put forward by Cole and Sambhi as I acknowledge that for one to try and achieve mukti through good karma is difficult ~~due~~ due to temptations in the world.

Cole and Sambhi put forward the idea that "~~asc~~ "asceticism and renunciation are rejected". This illustrates that one should remain in the ~~world~~ society as well as be spiritual, so the balance of mīn pīn in order to generate good karma and achieve mukti or jivan mukti, liberated whilst alive. This expresses the idea that one ~~is able to~~ must have a balance to ensure they can achieve God-realisation. However, one key Sikh teaching is that God is one and this can be seen in the Tapji

Sahib as it states that "Shiva, Vishnu, Brahma and Parvati are all manifestations of the one". This highlights the idea that there is only one God who is without religion, as this can be seen through Guru Nanak's lived experience. Therefore the rejection of asceticism is not prominent as in Buddhism Buddha achieved enlightenment through advanced meditation. This rejected the balance between *min pin* as Buddha was only focused on spirituality. This links to N. Smart's social dimension as it has an impact on "institutions and teachings" as if God is one then all should be able to achieve enlightenment through spirituality alone. Therefore this impacts the society as teachings differ which could lead to a problem in the belief in God. Therefore I disagree with Cole and Sambhi as there is evidence which demonstrates that a balance between *min* and *pin* is not fundamental to achieve enlightenment.

In conclusion, most of the arguments put forward by Cole and Samsoni is agreeable as it is reflective of Sikh teachings and beliefs which helps one achieve ~~enlightened~~ enlightenment. However, there are ideas that can be ~~contradict~~ contradicted and disagreed as it does not reflect all teachings. Therefore most ideas put forward by Cole and Samsoni is agreeable as it is reflective of core Sikh teachings and practices.

a) Within Sikhism, living the life of a householder in terms of grihasthi jivan is ~~essentat~~ an essential step towards achieving oneness with God. In order to accomplish living the life as a householder, one must break through ~~set~~ the self-reliance that exists within them. In this essay, I will examine the argument and interpretation put forward in this passage with regards to the householder basis of ethics in terms of Sikhism.

" Sikh ethics are based upon... the principles of kirt karo, nam japo and vand karo, work, worship and charity." This quote put forward by Cole and Sambhi outlines the basic duties a Sikh is required to follow. The main ideas ~~put~~ ^{is to} put across here ~~are~~ follow ~~the~~ ~~the~~ 3 principles set by Guru Nanak Dev Ji. The fact that Cole and Sambhi have derived the basic requirements through the teachings of Guru Nanak strengthen their argument on how a Sikh must live their life. The main principles of 'nam japna' (meditating on Gods name), 'kirt karni' (earning an honest living) and vand ko chatna (sharing what you have) was first put forward by Guru Nanak Dev Ji, and since have been ~~re~~ re-emphasised upon. In accordance to Sikhism,

the three principles are the starting points of living a householder life. With regards to the lives of the Gurus, it is evident through historical contexts that they ~~noted~~ kept the 3 principles at the heart of all their actions. Nivnan Smart refers to historical contexts functioning as a 'myth', which means that they cannot be falsified upon or verified upon. Nivnan Smart further portrays in her 'mythological dimension' that a myth allows doctrines to be brought about. Through the concept of establishing the 3 principles, doctrines have been set to follow them. Doctrines are thought to be an attempt to give system, clarity and intellect to what is revealed. As a result of this, it is visible that the idea of following the 3 principles as a basis of living life according to Sikh ethics is strengthened within what Cole and Sambhi have portrayed. The interpretation put forward by Cole and Sambhi can be seen to be fairly valid and justifiable because this ethic is seen to be derived from early Sikhism and was implemented in the lives of Gurus. Evidence comes from the concept of 'daswant' (sharing 10% of your earnings) through Guru Arjan Dev Ji and the establishment of Kartarpur to earn an honest living.

thruves which conquers ones mind - lust, anger, attachment, greed, and ego. Activities which result from these emotions must be avoided. Cole and Sambhi have put forward their argument in a non-biased approach as if has clear lines to Sikhism. Living a Gurmukh lifestyle was encouraged by all Gurus and putting certain behaviours into practice was also encouraged by them. Ways to overcome self-contradictions and the 5 evils are all listed in the Sikh Code of Ethics, in the Rehat Maryada. The Rehat Maryada ~~also~~ highlights the main duties a Sikh must perform to ~~and~~ live the ~~the~~ 'ideal sikh way of life'. Therefore, it can be seen that Cole and Sambhi's argument of breaking through haumai to live the ideal sikh lifestyle is essential.

✎ "Practising the virtues of contentment, patience ... and humility ... is considered to be the lynchpin of them all". The quote put forward by Cole and Sambhi here is a follow up of their previous point. In order for one to avoid the 5 evils, one must be able to practise actions of humility and compassion. Within Sikhism, the 5 treasures are emphasised upon, which

consist of compassion, contentment and humility. Cole and Sambhu have backed up their point by quoting the Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji (SGGS). "Sweetness and humility are the essence of all virtues". This further ~~is~~ ~~is~~ emphasises the point that for one to overcome the cycle of samsara and feelings of devoid, they must engage in practices to do with contentment and compassion. Examples of such come from the lives of Guru's, whereby compassion and humility could be seen ~~are~~ from giving women equal rights as men. During the time of Guru Amar Das Ji, widows were not allowed to remarry, but were rather forced to burn themselves in their husbands pyre. Guru Amar Das Ji spoke out against this and eradicated the Sati System, giving women equal rights as men to remarry. Such acts ~~is~~ illustrate the concept of contentment, and humility, as putting others before ones self demonstrated care and compassion. Humility can be seen through Guru Gobind Singh Ji as he quotes in the Bachitar Natak, "if anyone calls me God, he shall burn in

the faces of hell, see me only as the slave of God".
Therefore, it can be seen that Cole and Sambhi's argument of engaging in positive actions within society helps avoid actions being taken through the S. however.

Nevertheless, Cole and Sambhi have further gone on to speak about how a Sikh must not withdraw themselves from society. "... Not as one who has withdrawn themselves from society ... A Sikh should explore the meaning of God-realisation". The idea put across by Cole and Sambhi here directly links to the social dimension put forward by Ninian Smart - Ninian Smart defines this as the way institutions have an impact on religious beliefs. For a Sikh to fulfil the requirements of 'grihasthi jivan', they must engage themselves within society and explore ways to realise God. It is through God-realisation one can further live their life in accordance to an ideal Sikh. An

example of this comes through Guru Nanak's experience of going to Tibet, whereby he had explained to the villagers that living as a hermit is not the way of life. Furthermore, Guru Nanak established the city of Kartarpur, which was made for everyone to engage themselves in. Also, the concept of miri puri, the balance between physical and spiritual further emphasised the idea of not living like a hermit. One must have a balance of their spiritual science towards religion and physical. As one meditates, one must also engage themselves in seva, trying to help help others. This argument put forward by Cole and Sambhi can be seen as quite strong, because there are many cases within Sikhism whereby asceticism is rejected. The jappi also speaks about how 'asceticism is futile'. Therefore, Cole and Sambhi have a valid argument in trying to justify that one must engage

with society to live the life of a householder.

(b) The idea of engaging yourself with society to live like a householder is a belief which I agree with. Cole and Samphe have ~~the~~ derived this point from the many experiences of the Gurus. Within Sikhism, the idea of ~~a~~ actively joining yourself with society is consistently encouraged upon. This can be seen through human experience which occurs on a day-to-day basis. Seva is a fundamental concept of Sikhism. Physical seva involves one in engaging themselves with society. Also, the idea of langar further strengthens the point of keeping together with society, because it helps unify the panth. The basic langar requirement is, everyone sits together to eat the same meal, regardless of caste, creed, gender or religion. This therefore strengthens the point of the importance of engaging with society, as opposed to moving away from it.

Some may disagree with the idea of engaging yourself with society. Some may believe that society comes in the way of religious beliefs, because it hinders the way one thinks and alters the actions they perform, due to the expectations they have. An example can be seen of the different sects within Sikhism.

Nirankaris for example stay away from the physical side of Sikhism and focus more on the spiritual, because society is seen to be a distraction. This can ~~also~~ be seen to be true because nowadays, society has set standards which all are expected to adhere to, and therefore this may influence one's way in which they choose to reach God.

Furthermore, Cole and Sambhi have highlighted in the passage that 'putting ~~practice~~ principles into practice is difficult ...' This quote is a strong point, because with

society nowadays, the requirements to remain pure and not be attached by the materialistic desires is difficult. I agree with this point, because the way in which people live is ~~to~~ majorly influenced by others. A strong example is dispersion. Maharaja Ranjit Singh was the ruler of Punjab. ~~the~~ when his son - Dilip Singh moved to England, he changed his physical identity by cutting his hair. This example demonstrates how difficult it is for one to not 'fit in' despite what society and norms expect.

However, some may disagree with this point. This is because many practices have been put into place to ~~ensure~~ help sickly live the life of an ideal Sikh and follow the footsteps of the Gurus. The establishment of the Rahat Maryada - a set code of ethics is accessible to everyone.

Paper Summary

This paper was first examined in 2010. It has been a significant and worthwhile feature of the current Spec, enabling candidates to study, in detail, sources and to develop synoptic links.

In 2018 the new A level Specification will be first examined (with AS in 2017). The new A level develops the opportunity to study sources. All A level components will have anthologies, normally with four sources and these will have a compulsory question on all A level papers. The new Specification incorporates the Cole and Sambhi source already used in the current Specification. There are two sources by N K Singh dealing with origins and also feminism and finally a comparison with Jakobsh on women.

It can be noted that the ideas in the current anthologies can continue to be used in various ways across the new Specification.

Grade Boundaries

Grade boundaries for this, and all other papers, can be found on the website on this link:

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