

Religious Studies

Advanced GCE

Unit **G585**: Developments in Christian Theology

Mark Scheme for January 2011

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Band	Mark /21	AO1	Mark /14	AO2
0	0	absent/no relevant material	0	absent/no argument
1	1-5	almost completely ignores the question <ul style="list-style-type: none"> little relevant material some concepts inaccurate shows little knowledge of technical terms a.c.i.q	1-3	very little argument or justification of viewpoint <ul style="list-style-type: none"> little or no successful analysis views asserted with no justification v lit arg
Communication: often unclear or disorganised; can be difficult to understand; spelling, punctuation and grammar may be inadequate				
2	6-9	A basic attempt to address the question <ul style="list-style-type: none"> knowledge limited and partially accurate limited understanding might address the general topic rather than the question directly selection often inappropriate limited use of technical terms b att	4-6	a basic attempt to sustain an argument and justify a viewpoint <ul style="list-style-type: none"> some analysis, but not successful views asserted but little justification b att
Communication: some clarity and organisation; easy to follow in parts; spelling, punctuation and grammar may be inadequate				
3	10-13	satisfactory attempt to address the question <ul style="list-style-type: none"> some accurate knowledge appropriate understanding some successful selection of material some accurate use of technical terms sat att	7-8	the argument is sustained and justified <ul style="list-style-type: none"> some successful analysis which may be implicit views asserted but not fully justified sust / just
Communication: some clarity and organisation; easy to follow in parts; spelling, punctuation and grammar may be inadequate				
4	14-17	a good attempt to address the question <ul style="list-style-type: none"> accurate knowledge good understanding good selection of material technical terms mostly accurate g att	9-11	a good attempt at using evidence to sustain an argument holistically <ul style="list-style-type: none"> some successful and clear analysis some effective use of evidence views analysed and developed g att
Communication: generally clear and organised; can be understood as a whole; spelling, punctuation and grammar good				
5	18-21	A very good / excellent attempt to address the question showing understanding and engagement with the material <ul style="list-style-type: none"> very high level of ability to select and deploy relevant information accurate use of technical terms vg/e att	12-14	A very good / excellent attempt which uses a range of evidence to sustain an argument holistically <ul style="list-style-type: none"> comprehends the demands of the question uses a range of evidence shows understanding and critical analysis of different viewpoints vg/e att
Communication: answer is well constructed and organised; easily understood; spelling, punctuation and grammar very good				

Answer **two** questions, **one** from Part 1 and **one** from Part 2

Part 1

1 Assess the view that John Hick's global theology is doomed to failure. [35]

AO1

Candidates might begin by outlining Hick's plural paradigm. They might explain that Hick's paradigm is built on two presuppositions.

Firstly that all religions are a phenomenal expression of noumenal reality. A Kantian epistemology enables Hick to make this distinction that the *An Sich* or the Real is not itself knowable but is experienced through the various aspects of religion which have their foundation in religious experience.

Secondly that religions express the sense of the Real through myth and metaphor which has to be demythologised in order to recover the original existential experience. Candidates might therefore give examples of what this means in Christian theology eg that Jesus' divinity is not an objective reality but an expression of his God-consciousness and the Trinity is a way in which the Real is 'seen-as' a dynamic of three persons.

Candidates might then go on to explain that by global theology Hick does not mean that there should be one super-religion but that there should be a shared aim amongst the theologians and philosophers of the great world religions to understand that phenomenal differences are not a bar to a shared noumenal reality.

AO2

Some might argue that Hick's aims are admirable. A global theology respects religious diversity, gives value to religion as the means of living a reality-centred life rather than a self-centred existence and enjoys the cultural expressions between different faiths and traditions. They might argue that it is not doomed to failure because many people already share this vision and indeed many religions have never been predicated on dogmatic exclusivism.

On the other hand candidates might argue that global theology undermines the integrity of religions. It certainly dismisses the central aspects of Christianity as subjective myths when they actually convey objective truths. They might also argue that global theology assumes that Buddhists, for example, have a notion of the Real when they do not.

Finally, some might argue that Hick's paradigm fails to account for a post-modern view of life which rejects objective realities of any kind. Some might consider that Hick is not radical enough and compare him with, for example, Don Cupitt.

2 'Karl Rahner's teaching on Grace offers the best solution to the relationship of Christianity and other religions.' Discuss. [35]

AO1

Candidates might begin with a general introduction to Rahner's theology. This might include his position as a Roman Catholic combined with natural theology (and openness to Grace) and the universal Church but with a theology which considers salvation to be possible outside Christianity.

Candidates might therefore discuss his view that the history of salvation begins prior to the Christ-event and includes both Jews and non-Jews (as seen in the Old Testament). They might also discuss the important notion that salvation is contingent on wanting to be a

member of the Church (*votum ecclesiae*), the idea of Church does not necessarily have to be expressed in visible institutional terms but can also be described as the invisible mystical body of Christ.

Candidates may then consider Rahner's teaching on anonymous Christianity and the anonymous Christian. They might bring the discussion above together with a discussion of Acts 17 and Paul's speech at the Areopagus – a speech which Rahner considers captures the idea of the anonymous Christian and God's Grace as expressed in the creation, conscience, human institutions and religions. Finally, candidates may explain that without God's Grace even responding explicitly to God is insufficient and that salvation is always a gift.

AO2

Some may argue that Rahner's mystical notion of Church and God's Grace establishes a very firm basis for a theology of religions which recognises the special features of Christian theology whilst valuing those of different faiths (or none) who live their lives through good will and in response to the divine.

On the other hand some may consider that Rahner has given greater priority to Grace than to Christ. His theology fails to prioritise special revelation and in particular the merit of being specifically Christian. They might also consider what the implications are for mission and if an anonymous Christian rejects Christianity when they meet it explicitly.

Part 2

Answer **one** question

3 'Becoming a mother is a Christian duty for women.' Discuss. [35]

AO1

There are many ways in which this essay may be tackled. Some may choose to consider the biblical and traditional Christian teaching, others may discuss feminist theologies and others a combination of both.

Those who take the traditional route may wish to refer to the Genesis command to be fruitful and to multiply as a general command for humans but a special duty for women (Eve as 'mother of the living'). Some might see motherhood as the distinctive and unique role of the woman who sustains and gives birth to life and, like God, sustains her children. They might refer to the Catholic *Mulieris Dignitatem* which celebrates the Virgin Mary as theotokos and therefore says of women: '*Motherhood implies from the beginning a special openness to the new person: and this is precisely the woman's "part."* In this openness, in conceiving and giving birth to a child, the woman "discovers herself through a sincere gift of self."

Others might consider the radical feminists (theological and secular) who consider that liberal and reconstructionist feminist response have undermined the distinctive role of women as mothers. Christian feminist radicals argue that gender is not social invention but an expression of what it means to be a woman.

Some candidates might, therefore, note that the radical position shares much in common with traditional Christian teaching but that the emphasis is not on submission and obedience but independence, liberation and difference.

AO2

Some candidates might argue that both equality feminist theology and reconstructionist theology consider motherhood to be an option but not a duty. They might argue that men and women have equal choice to work, or form a family or both but as in the example of Mary and Martha the domestic sphere is not assumed to be the automatic role of the woman. Some might argue that Marxist analysis of traditional families reveals the oppressive role which women find themselves in and that the Kingdom of God's challenge to the existing order might also question the role of the woman as mother as expressed in *Mulieris Dignitatem* which still favour men's continued power over women.

On the other hand some candidates might argue that the traditional teaching of the Church has moved on from Augustine and Luther and choosing to be a mother celebrates the gender difference between men and women which is part of the natural order of things. They might consider that part of the problems of families today (Christian or otherwise) is a breakdown in gender roles which in the end harms men, women and children.

4 To what extent is the Old Testament of any use when discussing the role of women today? [35]

AO1

Candidates might begin by giving some examples of women in the Old Testament. Significant examples might include Deborah, Ruth and Esther all of whom displayed courage against adversity. Other women such as Jezebel, Delilah and Rebekah are prominent because of their use of cunning and power.

In addition candidates might consider the 'texts of terror' which Tribble argued illustrate the occasions when women have been raped, tortured, silenced and killed.

Finally, candidates might consider the Old Testament laws which determined a woman's place in society such as the law of jealousy, the laws of cleanliness and sexual purity.

AO2

Some candidates might argue that the great strength of the Old Testament is that although the world it depicts is several thousands of years ago, it captures human nature and everyday social experiences in a fresh and imaginative way. Radical feminist theologians might argue that we see here a rape culture which treats women as the property of men, as the 'texts of terror' illustrate, often of less value than a male slave. Yet, as Tribble's analysis illustrates, the stories are examples of suffering as part of a redemptive process by which Israel comes to see the depth and extent of her sins.

Some may argue that even Jezebel illustrates the way in which women have had to use their skills in a patriarchal world for survival. The story of Hagar is a paradigm for Womanist theologians because it speaks to poor black women today who have suffered the 'triple jeopardy' of racism, sexism and poverty.

On the other hand others might argue, following Mary Daly, that there is very little which the Old Testament can do for women today except to reveal the dangers of a religion which reinforces the master-slave relationship and entitles men to have control over women's bodies (as in decisions about abortion and marriage) and considers war to be a virtue.

Finally, some might argue that the Old Testament has to be read and modified from the perspective of the New Testament where the promise of equality in Genesis 1:27 becomes a reality in Jesus' teaching on the Kingdom of God.

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