

Religious Studies

Advanced GCE

Unit **G587**: Hinduism

Mark Scheme for June 2011

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- 1 'The Arya Samaj and the Brahmo Samaj had the same aims.' Discuss. [35]

AO1

Candidates need to outline the main features of both the Arya Samaj and the Bhramo Samaj.

The concern of the Arya Samaj is: the removal of 'later accretions' and refocusing on the Vedas; the belief of Dayananda in an impersonal and omnipotent God; the reinterpretation of the varna system; the disapproval of arranged and child marriages; the opening of education to both sexes.

The concern of the Brahmo Samaj is: understanding the ineffable God through reason; a return to the teachings of the Upanishads; disapproval of child marriage and sati (suttee).

AO2

A good response would show awareness of the religious and social reforms in both traditions before drawing a conclusion.

Candidates could argue that the social reforms were of more importance to the Bhramo Samaj, especially given the split between Sen and Tagore over the caste system. However it was the image worship which was Roy's prime motivator, and this could provide evidence against the statement.

Candidates could claim that the Arya Samaj's social reforms were merely an extension of the religious reforms in returning to the Vedic pattern, or that they were just as important, using the reform of the varna system as evidence.

Candidates might question the term 'had' in the question, considering whether the aims have changed over time or remained the same.

- 2 To what extent is dharma the most important concept in the Bhagavad Gita? [35]

AO1

Some description of the setting and events in the Bhagavad Gita would be appropriate, but responses must go beyond mere description to access the higher levels.

Candidates should be able to outline the concept of dharma as presented in the Bhagavad Gita, particularly the importance of doing one's duty even when it appears to go against other ethical considerations.

Candidates might explore other concepts within the Bhagavad Gita, for example the importance of carrying out actions without thought of karma or devotion in the form of bhakti.

AO2

Candidates might argue that since Krishna asks Arjuna to carry out his dharma, despite his concerns, that this illustrates the importance of dharma within the text.

Candidates might argue that another concept is of more importance. They might for example point to the revelation of Krishna to explore whether bhakti is a more important concept within the text.

Some candidates might explore whether any concept can be granted more importance, since they interlink – doing ones' duty for example is one way of demonstrating bhakti.

3 'It is impossible to follow all four purusharthas.' Discuss. [35]**AO1**

Candidates might explore the nature of moksha from the point of view of any of the traditions they have studied.

Candidates might explore the other three purushartas, kama (pleasure), artha (wealth) and dharma. They are likely to do so in the context of the system of varnashramadharma.

Some candidates might explore the historical background to the four purushartas, and consider whether they were designed as one system from the beginning, or an uneasy marriage between different traditions.

AO2

Candidates might argue that moksha is the aim, and kama, artha and dharma are the methods to reach it, thus providing a coherent link between the three, and allowing them all to be practised together.

Candidates might argue that kama, artha and dharma are completely unrelated to moksha, since they are all focused on behaviour in this life, whilst moksha is about the next.

Candidates might consider whether kama and artha are linked, whilst dharma and moksha create another pair, thus contradicting the statement above.

4 'Sankara was not a monist.' Discuss. [35]**AO1**

Candidates could explore the idea that Brahman and atman are inseparable, and that appearances otherwise are illusion (maya).

Candidates may explain how the path of jnana is ultimately about realising that Brahman and atman are one.

Some candidates may be aware that Sankara allowed for worship at the start of the path, but as a person becomes aware that Brahman and atman are identical he or she will realise that worship is pointless, the person is worshipping themselves.

AO2

Candidates may be aware that worship is allowed at an early stage of the path, so may claim that in some ways Sankara could be seen as a monotheist.

However candidates could argue that in seeing Brahman and atman as one, Sankara is a monist, only allowing monotheism as a temporary stage, before the reality is perceived.

Some candidates might contrast the non-dualist approach of Sankara with the qualified non-dualism of Ramanuja, but this is not expected.

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